

# CLARISSA. OR, THE HISTORY OF A YOUNG LADY:

*Comprehending*

*The most Important Concerns of Private LIFE;*  
*And particularly shewing,*  
*The DISTRESSES that may attend the Misconduct*  
*Both of PARENTS and CHILDREN,*

*In Relation to MARRIAGE.*

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M.DCC.XLVIII.





THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE,  
VOL. VI.

LETTER I.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;.

Friday, June 30.

**I**A M ruined, undone, blown-up, destroyed, and worse than annihilated, that's certain! —But was not the news shocking enough, dost thou think, without thy throwing into the too weighty scale, reproaches, which thou couldest have had no opportunity to make, but for my own voluntary communications? At a time too, when, as it falls out, I have another very sensible disappointment to struggle with?

I imagine, if there be such a thing as future punishment, it must be none of the smallest mortifications, that a *new* devil shall be punished by a worse *old* one. And, *Take that!* And, *Take that!* to have the old satyr cry to the screaming sufferer, laying on with a cat-o'-nine-tails, with a star of burn-

## The HISTORY of

ing brass at the end of each : And, *For what ! For what !*—Why, if the truth might be fairly told, for not being so bad a devil as myself !

Thou art, surely, casuist good enough to know (what I have insisted upon (*a*) heretofore), that the sin of seducing a credulous and easy girl, is as great as that of bringing to your lure an incredulous and watchful one.

However ungenerous an appearance what I am going to say may have from *my* pen, let me tell thee, That if such a lady as Miss Harlowe chose to enter into the matrimonial state (*I am resolved to disappoint thee in thy meditated triumph over my rage and despair !*), and, according to the old patriarchal system, to go on contributing to get sons and daughters, with no other view, than to bring them up piously, and to be good and useful members of the commonwealth, what a devil had she to do, to let her fancy run a gadding after a Rake ? One whom she knew to be a Rake ?

O but truly, she hoped to have the merit of reclaiming him. She had formed pretty notions, how charmingly it would look to have a penitent of her own making, dangling at her side, to church, thro' an applauding neighbourhood : And, as their family increased, marching with her thither, at the head of their boys and girls, processionally, as it were, boasting of the fruits of their *honest desires*, as my good Lord Bishop has it in his Licence. And then, what a comely sight, all kneeling down together in one pew, according to eldership, as we have seen in effigie, a whole family upon some old monument, where the honest chevalier, in armour, is presented kneeling, with uplift hands, and half a dozen jolter-headed crop-eared boys behind him, ranged *gradatim*, or step-fashion, according to age and size, all in the same posture—Facing his pious dame, with a ruff about her neck, and as many whey-faced girls, all kneeling

(a) Vol. iii. p. 351, 352.

kneeling behind her : An altar between them, and an opened book upon it : Over their heads semilunar rays darting from gilded clouds, surrounding an achievement-motto, IN COELO SALVS—or QUIES—perhaps, if they have happened to live the usual married life of brawl and contradiction.

It is certainly as much my misfortune to have fallen in with Miss Clarissa Harlowe, were I to have valued my reputation or ease, as it is that of Miss Harlowe to have been acquainted with me. And, after all, what have I done more than prosecute the maxims, by which thou and I, and every Rake are governed, and which, before I knew this lady, we have pursued from pretty girl to pretty girl, as fast as we had set one down, taking another up ;—just as the fellows do, with their flying-coaches and flying-horses at a country-fair—With a *Who rides next!* *Who rides next!*

But here, in the present case, to carry on the volant metaphor (for I must either be merry, or mad), is a pretty little Miss, just come out of her hanging-sleeve coat, brought to buy a pretty little fairing ; for the world, Jack, is but a great fair, thou knowest ; and, to give thee serious reflection for serious, all its toys but tinselled hobby-horses, gilt gingerbread, squeaking trumpets, painted drums, and so forth.—

Now, behold, this pretty little Miss skimming from booth to booth, in a very pretty manner. One pretty little fellow called Wyerly, perhaps ; another jiggetting rascal called Biron, a third simpering varlet of the name of Symmes, and a more hideous villain than any of the rest with a long bag under his arm, and parchment settlements tagg'd to his heels, ycleped Solmes ; pursue her from raree-show to raree-show, shoudering upon one another at every turning, stopping when she stops, and set a spinning again when she moves.—And thus dangled after, but

still in the eye of her watchful guardians, traverses the pretty little Miss thro' the whole fair, equally delighted and delighting : Till at last, taken with the invitation of the *lac'd-hat orator*, and seeing several pretty little bib-wearers stuck together in the flying-coaches; cutting safely the yielding air, in the One-go-up, the Other-go-down picture-of-the-world vehicle, and all with as little fear as wit, is tempted to ride next.

In then suppose she slyly pops, when *none of her friends are near her*: And if, after two or three ups and downs, her pretty head turns giddy, and she throws herself out of the coach, when at its elevation, and so dashes out her pretty little brains, who can help it !—And would you hang the poor fellow, whose *professed trade* it was to set the pretty little creatures a flying ?

'Tis true, this pretty little Miss, being a *very* pretty little Miss, being a *very much-admired* little Miss, being a *very good* little Miss, who always minded her book, and had passed thro' her samplar-doctrine with high applause ; had even stitched out in gaudy propriety of colours, an Abraham offering up Isaac, a Samson and the Philistines, and flowers, and knots, and trees, and the sun and the moon, and the seven stars, all hung up in frames with glasses before them, for the admiration of her future grandchildren : Who likewise was intitled to a very pretty little estate : Who was descended from a pretty little family upwards of one hundred years gentility ; which lived in a very pretty little manner, respected a very little on their own accounts, a great deal on hers :—

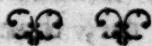
For such a pretty little Miss as this to come to so very great a misfortune, must be a very sad thing : But, tell me, would not the losing of any ordinary child, of any other less considerable family, of less shining or amiable qualities, have been as great and as heavy

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heavy a loss to that family, as the losing this pretty little Miss to hers?

To descend to a very low instance, and that only as to *personality*; hast thou any doubt, that thy strong-muscled bony face was as much admired by thy mother, as if it had been the face of a Lovelace, or any other handsome fellow; and had thy picture been drawn, would she have forgiven the painter, had he not expressed so exactly thy lineaments, as that every one should have discerned the likeness? The *handsome* likeness is all that is wished for. Ugliness made familiar to us, with the partiality natural to fond parents, will be beauty all the world over.—Do thou apply.



BUT, alas, Jack, all this is but a copy of my countenance, drawn to evade thy malice!—Tho' I answer thy unfriendly purpose to own it, I cannot forbear to own it, that I am stung to the very soul with this unhappy—*Accident*, must I call it?—Have I nobody, whose throat, either for carelessness or treachery, I ought to cut, in order to pacify my vengeance!—

When I reflect upon my *last* iniquitous intention, the *first* outrage so nobly resented, as well as, so far as she was able, so nobly resisted, I cannot but conclude, that I was under the power of fascination from these accursed Circes; who, pretending to know their own sex, would have it, that there is in every woman a yielding, or a weak-resisting moment to be met with: And that *yet*, and *yet*, and *yet*, I had not tried enough:—But that, if neither love nor terror should enable me to hit that lucky moment, when, by help of their cursed arts, she was *once overcome*, she would be for *ever overcome*:—Appealing to all my experience, to all my knowledge of the sex, for a justification of their assertion.

My appeal to experience, I own, was but too

favourable to their argument : For dost thou think, I could have held my purpose against such an angel as this, had I ever before met with one so much in earnest to defend her honour against the unwearied artifices and perseverance of the man she loved ? Why then were there not more examples of a virtue so immovable ? Or, why was this singular one to fall to my lot ? Except indeed to double my guilt ; and at the same time to convince all that should hear of her story, that there are angels as well as devils in the flesh ?

So much for confession ; and for the sake of humouring my conscience ; with a view likewise to disarm thy malice by acknowledgement : Since no one shall say worse of me, than I will of myself on this occasion.

One thing I will nevertheless add, to shew the sincerity of my contrition :—Tis this, that if thou canst by any means find her out within these three days, or any time before she has discovered the stories relating to Captain Tomlinson and her Uncle to be what they are ; and if thou canst prevail upon her to consent ; I will actually, in thy presence, and his (he to represent her uncle), marry her.

I am still in hopes it may be so—She cannot be long concealed—I have already set all engines at work to find her out ; and if I do, what *indifferent* persons (and no one of her *friends*, as thou observest, will look upon her) will care to imbroil themselves with a man of my figure, fortune, and resolution ?—Shew her this part then, or any other part of this letter, at thy own discretion, if thou *canst* find her : For, after all, methinks I would be glad, that this affair, which is bad enough in itself, should go off without worse personal consequences to any-body else ; and yet it runs in my mind, I know not why, that sooner or later, it will draw a few drops of blood after it ; except she and I can make it up between

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ourselves. And this may be another reason why she should not carry her resentment too far — Not that such an affair would give me much concern neither, were I to choose my man or men ; for I heartily hate all her family but herself ; and ever shall.

LET me add, that the lady's plot to escape appears to me no extraordinary one. There was much more luck than probability, that it should do : Since, to make it succeed, it was necessary, that Dorcas and Will. and Sinclair and her nymphs, should be all deceived, or off their guard. It belongs to me, when I see them, to give them my hearty thanks that they were ; and that their selfish care to provide for their own future security, should induce them to leave their outward door upon their bolt-latch, and be curs'd to them !

Mabell deserves a pitch-suit and a bonfire, rather than the lustring ; and as her cloaths are returned, let the lady's be put to her others, to be sent to her, when it can be told whither.—But not till I give the word, neither ; for we must get the dear fugitive back again, if possible.

I suppose that my stupid villain, who knew not such a goddess-shaped lady with a mien so noble, from the awkward and bent shouldered Mabell, has been at Hamstead to see after her : And yet I hardly think she would go thither. He ought to go thro' every street where bills for lodgings are up, to inquire after a new-comer. The houses of such as deal in womens matters, and tea, coffee, and such-like, are those to be inquired at for her. If some tidings be not quickly heard of her, I would not have either Dorcas, Will. or Mabell, appear in my sight, whatever their superiors think fit to do.

This, tho' written in character, is a very long letter, considering it is not a narrative one, or a journal of proceedings, like some of my former ;

for such will unavoidably and naturally, as I may say, run into length. But I have so used myself to write a great deal of late, that I know not how to help it. Yet I must add to its length, in order to explain myself on a hint I gave at the beginning of it, which was, that I have another disappointment, besides this of Miss Harlowe's escape, to bemoan.

And what dost think it is? Why, the old peer ~~ox~~ of his tough constitution! (for that would have helped him on) has made shift by fire and brimstone, and the devil knows what, to force the gout to quit the counterscarp of his stomach, just as it had collected all its strength, in order to storm the citadel of his heart: In short they have, by the mere force of stink-pots, hand-granades, and pop-guns, drove the slow-working pioneer quite out of the trunk into the extremities; and there it lies nibbling, and gnawing, upon his great toe; when I had hoped a fair end both of the distemper, and the distempered.

But I, who could write to *thee* of laudanum, and the wet cloth formerly, yet let 8000*l.* a year slip thro' my fingers, when I had entered upon it, more than in imagination (for I had begun to ask the Stewards questions, and to hear them talk of fines and renewals, and such sort of stuff), deserve to be mortified.

Thou canst not imagine, how differently the servants, and even my cousins, look upon me since yesterday, to what they did before. Neither the one nor the other bow and courtesy half so low.—Nor am I a quarter so often *his honour*, and *your honour*, as I was within these few hours, with the former: And as to the latter—It is *cousin Bobby* again, with the usual familiarity, instead of *Sir*, and *Sir*, and, *If you please, Mr. Lovelace*. And now they have the insolence to congratulate me on the recovery of the *best of uncles*, while I am forced to seem as much delighted

delighted as they, when, would it do me good, I could sit down and cry my eyes out.

I had bespoken my mourning in imagination, after the example of a certain foreign minister, who, before the death, or even last illness of Charles II. as honest White Kennet tells us, had half exhausted Blackwell-hall of its sables : An indication, as the historian would insinuate, that the monarch was to be poisoned, and the ambassador in the secret—And yet, fool that I was, I could not take the hint!—What a devil does a man read history for, if he cannot profit by the examples he finds in it?

But thus, Jack, is an observation of the old peer's verified, *That one misfortune seldom comes alone*: And so concludes

*Thy doubly-mortified*

LOVELACE.

## LETTER II.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss Howe.*

*Wednesday Night, June 28.*

*O my dearest Miss Howe!*

ONCE more have I escaped—But, alas! I, my best self, have not escaped!—Oh! your poor Clarissa Harlowe! You also will hate me, I fear! Yet you won't, when you know All!—

But no more of my self! My *last* self. You that can rise in a morning, to be blest, and to bless; and go to rest delighted with your own reflections, and in your unbroken, unstirring slumbers, conversing with faints and angels, the former only more pure than yourself, as they have shaken off the incumbrance of body; You shall be my subject, as you have long, long, been my only pleasure. And let me, at awful distance, revere my beloved Anna Howe, and in

her reflect upon what her Clarissa Harlowe once was! —

◆ ◆ ◆

FORGIVE, Oh! forgive my rambling. My peace is destroyed. My intellects are touched. And what flighty nonsense must you read, if now you will vouchsafe to correspond with me, as formerly!

Oh! my best, my dearest, my *only* friend! What a tale have I to unfold! — But still upon *Self*, this vile, this hated *Self*! — I will shake it off, if possible; and why should I not, since I think, except one wretch, I hate nothing so much! — *Self*, then, be banished from *Self* one moment (for I doubt it *will* for no longer) to inquire after a *dearer* object, my beloved Anna Howe! — Whose mind, all robed in spotless white, charms and irradiates — But what would I say? —



AND how, my dearest friend, after this rhapsody, which, on re-perusal, I would not let go, but to shew you, what a distracted mind dictates to my trembling pen; *How do you?* You have been very ill, it seems. That you are *recovered*, my dear, let me hear! — That your mamma is well, pray let me hear, and hear quickly! — This comfort, surely, is owing to me; for if life is no *worse* than chequer-work, I must now have a little white to come, having seen nothing but black, all unchequered dismal black, for a great, great while!



AND what is all this wild incoherence for? — It is only to beg to know how you have been, and how you now do, by a line directed for Mrs. Rachel Clark, at Mr. Smith's, a glove-shop, in King-street, Covent-garden; which (altho' my abode is a secret to every body else) will reach the hands of — *Your unhappy* — but that's not enough —

*Your miserable*

**CLARISSA HARLOWE.**

LETTER III.

*Mrs. Howe, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.*

(*Superscribed, as directed in the preceding.*)

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, Friday, June 30.*

**Y**OU will wonder to receive a letter from me. I am sorry for the great distress you seem to be in. Such a hopeful young lady as you were!—But see what comes of disobedience to parents!

For my part; altho' I pity you; yet I much more pity your poor father and mother. Such education as they gave you! such improvements as you made! and such delight as they took in you!—And all come to this!—

But pray, Miss, don't make my Nancy guilty of your fault; which is that of disobedience. I have charged her over and over not to correspond with one, who has made such a giddy step. It is not to her reputation, I am sure. You knew that I so charged her; yet you go on corresponding together, to my very great vexation; for she has been very perverse upon it, more than once. *Evil communication, Miss—* You know the rest.

Here, people cannot be unhappy by themselves, but they must involve their friends and acquaintance, whose discretion has kept them clear of their errors, into near as much unhappiness, as if they had run into the like of their own heads. Thus my poor daughter is always in tears and grief. And she has postponed her own felicity truly, because *you* are unhappy!

If people, who seek their own ruin, could be the only sufferers by their headstrong doings, it were something: But, O Miss, Miss, what have *you* to answer for, who have made as many grieved hearts, as have known you? The whole sex is indeed wounded

by you : For, who but Miss Clarissa Harlowe was proposed by every father and mother for a pattern for their daughters ?

I write a long letter, where I proposed to say but a few words ; and those to forbid you writing to my Nancy : And this as well because of the false step you have made, as because it will grieve her poor heart, and do you no good. If you love her, therefore, write not to her. Your sad letter came into my hands, Nancy being abroad, and I shall not shew it her : For there would be no comfort for her, if she saw it, nor for me, whose delight she is—As you once was to your parents—

But you seem to be sensible enough of your errors now ! So are all giddy girls, when it is too late—And what a crest-fallen figure then does their self-willed obstinacy and headstrongness compel them to make !

I may say too much : only as I think it proper to bear that testimony against your rashness, which it behoves every careful parent to bear. And none more than

*Your compassionating well-wisher,*

ANNABELLA HOWE.

I send this by a special messenger, who has business only so far as Barnet, because you shall have no need to write again ; knowing how you love writing : And knowing likewise, that misfortune makes people plaintive.

#### LETTER IV.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Mrs. HOWE.*

Saturday, July 1.

PERMIT me, Madam, to trouble you with a few lines, were it only to thank you for your reproofs ; which have nevertheless drawn fresh streams of blood from a bleeding heart.

My

My story is a dismal story. It has circumstances in it, that would engage pity, and possibly a judgment not altogether unfavourable, were those circumstances known. But it is my business, and shall be all my business, to repent of my failings, and not endeavour to extenuate them.

But I will not seek to distress your worthy mind. If I cannot suffer alone, I will make as few parties as I can in my sufferings. And, indeed, I took up my pen with this resolution, when I wrote the letter which has fallen into your hands : It was only to know, and that for a very particular reason, as well as for affection unbounded, if my dear Miss Howe, from whom I had not heard of a long time, were ill ; as I had been told she was ; and if so, how she now does. But my injuries being recent, and my distresses having been exceeding great, Self would crowd into my letter. When distressed, the human mind is apt to turn itself to every one in whom it imagined or wished an interest, for pity and consolation—Or, to express myself better and more concisely, in your own words, *Misfortune makes people plaintive* : And to whom, if not to a friend, can the afflicted complain ?

Miss Howe being abroad, when my letter came, I flatter myself that she is recovered. But it would be some satisfaction to me to be informed, if she has been ill. Another line from your hand would be too great a favour. But, if you will be pleased to direct any servant to answer yes, or no, to that question, I will not be farther troublesome.

Nevertheless, I must declare, that my Miss Howe's friendship was all the comfort I had, or expected to have, in this world ; and a line from her would have been a cordial to my fainting heart. Judge then, dearest Madam, how reluctantly I must obey your prohibition—But yet, I will endeavour to obey it ; altho' I should have hoped, as well from the tenor

of all that has passed between Miss Howe and me, as from her established virtue, that she could not be tainted by *Evil communication*, had one or two letters been permitted. This, however, I ask not for, since I think I have nothing to do, but to beg of God (who, I hope, has not yet withdrawn his grace from me, altho' he is pleased to let loose his justice upon my faults) to give me a truly broken spirit, if it be not already broken enough, and then to take to his mercy

*The unhappy*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Two favours, good Madam, I have to beg of you.—The first;—that you will not let any of my relations know, that you have heard from me. The other,—that no living creature be apprised where I am to be heard of, or directed to. This is a point that concerns me, more than I can express.—In short, my preservation from further evils may depend upon it.

LETTER V.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To HANNAH BURTON.

My good HANNAH,

Thursday, June 29.

STRANGE things have happened to me, since you were dismissed my service (so sorely against my will), and your pert fellow-servant set over me. But that must be all forgotten now—

How do you, my Hannah? Are you recovered of your illness? If you are, Do you choose to come and be with me? Or can you conveniently?

I am a very unhappy creature, and, being among all strangers, should be glad to have *you* with me, of whose fidelity and love I have had so many acceptable instances.

Living

Living or dying, I will endeavour to make it worth your while, my Hannah.

If you are recovered, as I hope, and if you have a good place, it may be, they would bear with your absence, and suffer somebody in your room, *for a month or so*: And, by that time, I hope to be provided for, and you may then return to your place.

Don't let any of my friends know of this my desire, whether you can come or not.

I am at Mr. Smith's, a hosier's and glove-shop, in King-street, Covent-garden.

You must direct to me by the name of Rachel Clark.

Do, my good Hannah, come if you can, to your poor young mistress, who always valued you, and always will, whether you come or not.

I send this to your mother at St. Alban's, not knowing where to direct to you. Return me a line, that I may know what to depend upon: And I shall see you have not forgotten the pretty hand you were taught, in happy days, by

*Your true friend,*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

## LETTER VI.

HANNAH BURTON, *In Answer.*

*Honored Maddam,*

*Monday, July 3.*

I HAVE not forgot to write, and never will forget any thing you, my dear young lady, was so good as to larn me. I am very forrowfull for your misfortens, my dearest young lady; so forrowfull, I do not know what to do. Gladd at harte would I be to be able to come to you. But indeed I have not been able to stir out of my room here at my mother's, ever since I was forsed to leave my place with a roomatise, which has made me quite and clene helpless.

helpless. I will pray for you night and day, my dearest, my kindest, my goodest young lady, who have been so badly used; and I am very sorry I cannot come to do you love and service; which will ever be in the harte of mee to do, if it was in my power:  
Who am

*Your most dewtifull servvant to command,*

HANNAH BURTON,

## LETTER VII.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Mrs. JUDITH  
NORTON.

*My dear Mrs. NORTON, Thursday, June 29.*

I Address myself to you after a very long silence (which, however, was not owing either to want of love or duty) principally to desire you to satisfy me in two or three points, which it behoves me to know.

My father, and all the family, I am informed, are to be at my uncle Harlowe's this day, as usual. Pray acquaint me, if they have been there? And if they were cheerful on the anniversary occasion? And also, if you have heard of any journey, or intended journey, of my brother, in company with Captain Singleton and Mr. Solmes.

Strange things have happened to me, my dear worthy and maternal friend!—Very strange things!—Mr. Lovelace has proved a very barbarous and ingrateful man to me. But, God be praised, I have escaped from him!—Being among absolute strangers (tho' I think worthy folks), I have written to Hannah Burton to come and be with me. If the good creature fall in your way, pray encourage her to come to me. I always intended to have her, she knows:—But hoped to be in happier circumstances.

Say,

Say nothing to any of my friends, that you have heard from me.

Pray, do you think my father would be prevailed upon, if I were to supplicate him by letter, to take off the heavy curse he laid upon me, at my going from Harlowe-Place?—I can expect no other favour from him: But that being literally fulfilled, as to my prospects in this life, I hope it will be thought to have operated far enough.

I am afraid *my Poor*, as I used to call the good creatures to whose necessities I was wont to administer, by your faithful hands, have missed me of late. But now, alas! I am poor myself. It is not the least aggravation of my fault, nor of my regrets, that with such inclinations as God had given me, I have put it out of my power to do the good I once pleased myself to think I was born to do. It is a sad thing, my dearest Mrs. Norton, to render ourselves unworthy of the talents Providence has intrusted to us!

But these reflections are now too late; and perhaps I ought to have kept them to myself. Let me, however, hope, that you love me still. Pray let me hope that you do: And then, notwithstanding my misfortunes, which have made me seem ingrateful to the kind and truly maternal pains you have taken with me from my cradle, I shall have the happiness to think that there is *One* worthy person, who hates

*The unfortunate*  
**CLARISSA HARLOWE.**  
Pray remember me to my foster-brother. I hope he continues dutiful and good to you.

Be pleased to direct for Rachel Clark, at Mr. Smith's in King-street, Covent-garden. But keep the direction an absolute secret.

LETTER

## LETTER VIII.

*Mrs. NORTON. In Answer.*

Saturday, July 1.

YOUR letter, my dearest young lady, cuts me to the heart! Why will you not let me know all your distresses!—Yet you have said enough!

My son is very good to me. A few hours ago he was taken with a feverish disorder. But I hope it will go off happily, if his ardour for business will give him the receipts from it, which his good master is willing to allow him. He presents his duty to you, and shed tears at hearing your sad letter read.

You have been misinformed as to your family's being at your uncle Harlowe's. They did not intend to be there. Nor was the day kept at all. Indeed, they have not stirred out, but to church (and that but three times), ever since the day you went away.—Unhappy day for them, and for all who know you!—To me, I am sure, most particularly so!—My heart now bleeds more and more for you.

I have not heard a syllable of such a journey as you mention, of your brother, Captain Singleton, and Mr. Solmes. There has been some talk, indeed, of your brother's setting out for his northern estates: But I have not heard of it lately.

I am afraid no letter will be received from you. It grieves me to tell you so, my dearest young lady. No evil can have happened to you, which they do not expect to hear of; so great is their antipathy to the wicked man, and so bad is his character.

I cannot but think hardly of their unforgivingness: But there is no judging for others by one's self. Nevertheless I will add, that, if you had had as gentle spirits to deal with as your own, or, I will be bold to say, as mine, these evils had never happened either

to

to them, or to you. I knew your virtue, and your love of virtue, from your very cradle; and I doubted not but *that*, with God's grace, would always be your guard:—But you could never be driven; nor was there occasion to drive you—So generous, so noble, so discreet—But how does my love of your amiable qualities increase my affliction; as these recollections must do yours!

You are escaped, my dearest Miss—Happily, I hope—That is to say, with your honour—Else, how great must be your distress!—Yet from your letter I dread the worst.

I am very seldom at Harlowe Place. The house is not the house it used to be, since you went from it. Then they are so relentless! And, as I cannot say harsh things of the beloved child of my heart, as well as bosom, they do not take it *amiss*, that I stay away.

Your Hannah left her place ill some time ago; and, as she is still at her mother's at St. Alban's, I am afraid she continues ill. If so, as you are among strangers, and I cannot encourage you at present to come into *these* parts, I shall think it my duty to attend you (let it be taken as it will) as soon as my Tommy's indisposition will permit; which I hope will be soon.

I have a little money by me. You say you are poor yourself—How grievous are those words from one intitled and accustomed to affluence!—Will you be so good to command it, my beloved young lady?—It is most of it your own bounty to me. And I should take a pride to restore it to its original owner.

Your Poor bless you, and pray for you continually. I have so managed your last benevolence, and they have been so healthy, and have had such constant employ, that it has held out; and will still hold out, till

till happier times, I hope, betide their excellent benefactress.

Let me beg of you, my dearest young lady, to take to yourself all those aids, which good persons, like you, draw from RELIGION, in support of their calamities. Let your sufferings be what they will, I am sure you have been innocent in your intention. So do not despont. None are made to suffer above what they *can*, and therefore *ought* to bear.

We know not the methods of Providence, and what wise ends it may have to serve in its dispensations to its poor creatures.

Few persons have greater reason to say this than myself. And since we are apt in calamities to draw more comfort from example than precept, you will permit me to remind you of my own lot: For who has had a greater share of afflictions than myself?

To say nothing of the loss of an excellent mother, at a time of life when motherly care is most wanted; the death of a dear father, who was an ornament to his cloth (and who had qualified me to be his scribe and amanuensis), just as he came within view of a preferment which would have made his family easy, threw me friendless into the wide world; threw me upon a very careless, and, which was much worse, a very unkind husband. Poor man!—But he was spared long enough, thank God, in a tedious illness, to repent of his neglected opportunities, and his light principles; which I have always thought of with pleasure, altho' I was left the more destitute for his chargeable illness, and ready to be brought to bed, when he died, of my Tommy.

But this very circumstance, which I thought the unhappiest that I could have been left in (so short-sighted is human prudence), became the happy means of recommending me to your mother, who, in regard to my character, and in compassion to my very destitute circumstances, permitted me, as I made a conscience

of not parting with my poor boy, to nurse both you and him, born within a few days of each other. And I have never since wanted any of the humble blessings which God has made me contented with.

Nor have I known what a very great grief was, from the day of my poor husband's death, till the day that your parents told me how much they were determined that you should have Mr. Solmes; when I was apprised not only of your aversion to him, but how unworthy he was of you: For then I began to dread the consequences of forcing so generous a spirit; and, till then, I never feared Mr. Lovelace, attracting as was his person, and specious his manners and address. For I was sure you would never have him, if he gave you not good reason to be convinced of his reformation; nor till your friends were as well satisfied in it as yourself. But that unhappy misunderstanding between your brother and Mr. Lovelace, and their joining so violently to force you upon Mr. Solmes, did all that mischief, which has cost you and them so dear, and poor me all my peace! O what has not this ingrateful, this doubly-guilty man to answer for!

Nevertheless, you know not what God has in store for you yet!—But if you are to be punished all your days here, for example-sake, in a case of such importance, for your one false step, be pleased to consider, That this life is but a state of probation; and if you have your purification in it, you will have your reward hereafter in a greater degree, for submitting to the dispensation with patience and resignation.

You see, my dearest Miss Clary, that I make no scruple to call the step you took a false one. In *you* it was less excusable than it would have been in any other young lady; not only because of your superior talents, but because of the opposition between *your* character and *his*: So that if you had been provoked to quit your father's house, it needed not to have been with

with him. Nor needed I, indeed, but as an instance of my *impartial* love, to have written this to you (a).

After this, it will have an unkind, and, perhaps, at this time, an unseasonable appearance, to express my concern, that you have not before favour'd me with a line.—Yet, if you can account to yourself for your silence, I dare say I ought to be satisfied; for I am sure you love me: As I both love and honour you, and ever will, and the more for your misfortunes.

One consolation, methinks, I have, even when I am sorrowing for your calamities; and that is, that I know not any young person so qualified to shine the brighter for the trials she may be exercised with: And yet it is a consolation that ends in adding to my regrets for your afflictions, because you are blessed with a mind so well able to bear prosperity, and to make every-body round you the better for it.—*Woe unto him!*—O this wretched, wretched man!—But I will forbear till I know more.

Ruminating on every thing your melancholy letter suggests, and apprehending, from the gentleness of your mind, the amiableness of your person, and your youth, the further misfortunes and inconveniences to which you may possibly be subjected, I cannot conclude without asking for your leave to attend you, and that in a very earnest manner:—And I beg of you not to deny me, on any consideration relating to *myself*, or even to the indisposition of my *other* beloved child; if I can be either of use or comfort to you. Were it, my dearest young lady, but for two or three days, permit me to attend you, altho' my son's illness should increase, and compel me to come down again at the end of those two or three days.—I repeat my request

(a) Mrs. Norton having only the family representation and invectives to form her judgment upon, knew not that Clarissa had determined against going off with Mr. Lovelace; nor how solicitous she had been to procure for herself *any other* protection than his, when she apprehended, that if she staid, she had no way to avoid being married to Mr. Solmes.

quest, likewise that you will command from me the little sum remaining in my hands, of your bounty to your Poor, as well as that dispensed to

*Your ever-affectionate and faithful servant,*

JUDITH NORTON.

## LETTER IX.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Lady BETTY LAWRENCE.*

Madam,

Thursday, June 29.

I hope you'll excuse the freedom of this address, from one who has not the honour to be personally known to you, altho' you must have heard much of Clarissa Harlowe. It is only to beg the favour of a line from your Ladyship's hand (by the next post, if convenient) in answer to the following questions.

1. Whether you wrote a letter, dated, as I have a memorandum, Wedn. June 7. congratulating your nephew Lovelace on his supposed nuptials, as reported to you by Mr. Spurrier, your Ladyship's steward, as from one Captain Tomlinson : — And in it reproaching Mr. Lovelace, as guilty of slight, &c. in not having acquainted your Ladyship and the family with his marriage ?
2. Whether your Ladyship wrote to Miss Montague to meet you at Reading, in order to attend you to your cousin Leeson's in Albemarle-street ; on your being obliged to be in town on your old Chancery-affair, I remember are the words ? And whether you bespeak your nephew's attendance there on Sunday night the 11th ?
3. Whether your Ladyship and Miss Montague did come to town at that time ? And whether you went to Hamstead, on Monday, in a hired coach

coach and four, your own being repairing ; and took from thence to town the young creature whom you visited there ?

Your Ladyship will probably guess, that these questions are not asked for reasons favourable to your nephew Lovelace. But be the answer what it will, it can do *him* no hurt, nor *me* any good ; only that I think I owe it to my former hopes (however deceived in them), and even to charity, that a person, of whom I was once willing to think better, should not prove so egregiously abandon'd, as to be wanting, in *every* instance, to that veracity, which is an indispensable in the character of a gentleman.

Be pleased, Madam, to direct to me (keeping the direction a secret for the present) to be left at the Belle-Savage on Ludgate-hill, till call'd for. I am,

*Your Ladyship's most humble servant,*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

## LETTER X.

LADY BETTY LAWRENCE, To Miss CLARISSA  
HARLOWE.

Dear Madam,

Saturday, July 1.

I find, that all is not as it should be between you and my nephew Lovelace. It will very much afflict me, and all his friends, if he has been guilty of any designed baseness to a lady of your character and merit.

We have been long in expectation of an opportunity to congratulate you and ourselves, upon an event most earnestly wished for by us all ; since all our hopes of *him* are built upon the power *you* have over him : For if ever man adored a woman, he is that man, and you, Madam, are that woman.

Miss Montague, in her last letter to me, in answer to one of mine, inquiring if she knew, from him, whether he could call you his, or was likely soon to

have that honour ; has these words : " I know not  
" what to make of my cousin Lovelace, as to the  
" point your Ladyship is so earnest about. He some-  
" times says, He is actually married to Miss Cl. Har-  
" lowe : At other times, that it is her own fault if  
" he be not :—He speaks of her not only with love,  
" but with reverence : Yet owns, that there is a  
" misunderstanding between them ; but confesses,  
" that she is wholly faultless. An angel, and not a  
" woman, he says she is : And that no man living  
" can be worthy of her." — This is what my niece  
Montague writes.

God grant, my dearest young lady, that he may  
not have so heinously offended you, that you *cannot*  
forgive him ! If you are not already married, and  
refuse to be his, I shall lose all hopes that he ever  
will marry, or be the man I wish him to be. So will  
Lord M. So will Lady Sarah Sadleir.

I will now answer your questions : But indeed I  
hardly know what to write, for fear of widening still  
more the unhappy difference between you. But yet  
such a young lady must command every thing from  
me. This then is my answer.

I wrote not any letter to him on or about the 7th  
of June.

Neither I nor my steward know such a man as  
Capt. Tomlinson.

I wrote not to my niece to meet me at Reading,  
nor to accompany me to my cousin Leeson's in  
town.

My Chancery-affair, tho', like most Chancery-  
affairs, it be of long standing, is nevertheless  
now in so good a way, that it cannot give me  
occasion to go to town.

Nor have I been in town these six months : Nor at  
Hamstead for several years.

Neither shall I have any temptation to go to town,  
except to pay my congratulatory compliments to

Mrs. Lovelace. On which occasion I should go with the greatest pleasure ; and should hope for the favour of your accompanying me to Glenham-Hall, for a month at least.

Be what will the reason of your inquiry, let me intreat you, my dear young lady, for Lord M.'s sake ; for my sake ; for this giddy man's sake, soul as well as body ; and for all our family's sakes ; not to suffer this answer to widen differences so far as to make you refuse him, if already he has not the honour of calling you his ; as I am apprehensive he has not, by your signing by your family-name.

And here let me offer to you my mediation to compose the difference between you, be it what it will. Your cause, my dear young lady, cannot be put into the hands of any-body living more devoted to your service, than into those of

*Your sincere admirer, and humble servant,*

ELIZ. LAWRENCE.

## LETTER XI.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Mrs. HODGES.*

*Mrs. HODGES,*

*Enfield, June 29.*

I Am under a kind of necessity to write to you, having no one among my relations to whom I dare write, or hope a line from, if I did. It is but to answer a question. It is this :

Whether you know such a man as Captain Tomlinson ? And, if you do, whether he be very intimate with my uncle Harlowe ?

I will describe his person, lest, possibly, he should go by another name among you ; altho' I know not why he should.

" He is a thin, tallish man, a little pock-fretten ;  
 " of a fallowish complexion. Fifty years of age,  
 " or more. Of a good aspect, when he looks up.  
 " He seems to be a serious man, and one who  
 " knows

" knows the world. He stoops a little in the shoulders.  
" Is of Berkshire. His wife of Oxfordshire; and  
" has several children. He removed lately into your  
" parts from Northamptonshire."

I must desire you, Mrs. Hodges, that you will not let my uncle, nor any of my relations, know that I write to you.

You used to say, that you would be glad to have it in your power to serve me. That, indeed, was in my prosperity. But, I dare say, you will not refuse me in a particular that will oblige me, without hurting yourself.

I understand, that my father, mother, and sister, and, I presume, my brother, and my uncle Antony, are to be at my uncle Harlowe's this day. God preserve them all, and may they rejoice in many happy birth-days! You will write six words to me concerning their healths.

Direct, for a particular reason, To Mrs. Dorothy Salcomb; To be left, till call'd for, at the Four Swans Inn, Bishopsgate-street.

You know my hand-writing well enough, were not the contents of the letter sufficient to excuse my name, or any other subscription, than that of

*Your Friend.*

## LETTER XII.

*Mrs. HODGES. In Answer.*

*Maddam,*

*Sat. July 1.*

I Return you an anser, as you wish me to doe. Master is acquainted with no fitch man. I am shure no fitch ever came to our house. And master sturs very little out. He has no harte to stur out. For why? Your obstincy makes um not care to see one another. Master's birth-day never was keept soe before: For not a sole heere; and nothing but sikeing and sorrowin from master, to think how it yused to bee.

I axfed master, if soe bee he knoed fitch a man as one Captain Tomlinson? But sayed not whirfor I axfed. He sed, No, not he.

Shure this is no trix nor forgary bruing agenſt maſter by won Tomlinſon—Won knoes not what cumpany you may have bin forſed to keep, ſen you went away, you knoe, Maddam. Ecſcuse me, Maddam; but Lundon is a peſtilent plafe; and that Squire Luveleſſ is a devil (for all he is fitch a like gentleman to look to), as I hev herd every boddy ſay; and thiſke as how you have found by thiſſ.

I truſte, Maddam, you wulde not let master cum to harme, if you knoed it, by any boddy, whoe may pretend too be acquainted with him: But, for fere, I querid with myſelf iff I ſhulde not tell him. Butt I was willin to ſhow you, that I wulde pleſſure you in advarsity, if advarsity bee youre lott, as wel as proſperity; for I am none of thone as woulde doe otherwiſe. Soe noe more frum

*Your humbleſſarvant, to wiſh you well,*

SARAH HODGES.

### LETTER XIII.

*Miſſ CL. HARLOWE, To Lady BETTY LAWRENCE.*

Madam,

Monday, July 3.

I Cannot excuse myſelf from giving your Ladyſhip this one trouble more; to thank you, as I moſt heartily do, for your kind letter.

I muſt own to you, Madam, that the honour of being related to Ladies, as eminent for their virtue as for their deſcent, was at firſt no ſmall inducement with me, to lend an ear to Mr. Lovelace's addreſſ. And the rather, as I was determined, had it come to effect, to do every thing in my power to deſerve your favourable opinion.

I had another motive, which I knew would of itſelf give me merit with your whole family; a pre-ſumptuous

fumptuous one (a punishably presumptuous one, as it has proved), in the hope that I might be an humble means, in the hand of Providence, to reclaim a man, who had, as I thought, good sense enough at bottom to be reclaimed ; or, at least, gratitude enough to acknowledge the intended obligation, whether the generous hope were to succeed, or not.

But I have been most egregiously mistaken in Mr. Lovelace ; the only man, I persuade myself, pretending to be a gentleman, in whom I could have been so *much* mistaken : For while I was endeavouring to save a drowning wretch, I have been, not accidentally, but premeditatedly, and of set purpose, drawn in after him. And he has had the glory to add to the list of those he has ruined, a name, that, I will be bold to say, would not have disparaged his own. And this, Madam, by means that would shock humanity to be made acquainted with.

My whole end is served by your Ladyship's answer to the questions I took the liberty to put to you in writing. Nor have I a wish to make the unhappy man more odious to you, than is necessary to excuse myself for absolutely declining your offered mediation.

When your Ladyship shall be informed of the following particulars :

That after he had compulsorily, as I may say, tricked me into the act of going off with him, he could carry me to one of the vilest houses, as it proved, in London :

That he could be guilty of a wicked attempt, in resentment of which, I found means to escape from him to Hamstead :

That, after he had found me out there (I know not how), he could procure two women, dressed out richly, to personate your Ladyship and Miss Montague ; who, under pretence of engaging me to make a visit in town to your cousin Leeson (promising to

return with me that evening to Hamstead), betrayed me back again to the vile house : Where, again made a prisoner, I was first robbed of my senses ; and then (why should I seek to conceal that disgrace from others, which I cannot hide from myself ? ) of my honour :

When your Ladyship shall know, That, in the shocking progress to this ruin, wilful falsehoods, repeated forgeries (particularly of one letter from your Ladyship, another from Miss Montague, and a third from Lord M.), and numberless perjuries, were not the least of his crimes :

You will judge, That I can have no principles that will make me worthy of an alliance with Ladies of yours and your noble sister's character, if I could not from my soul declare, that such an alliance can never now take place.

I will not offer to clear myself intirely of blame : But, as to him, I have no fault to accuse myself of : My crime was, The corresponding with him at firſt, when prohibited ſo to do, by thoſe who had a right to my obedience ; made ſtill more inexcutable, by giving him a clandestine meeting, which put me into the power of his arts. And for this, I am content to be puniſhed : Thankful, that at laſt I have eſcapèd from him ; and have it in my power to reject ſo wicked a man for my husband : And glad, if I may be a warning, ſince I cannot be an example : Which once (very vain, and very conceited as I was !) I propoſed to myſelf to be !

All the ill I wiſh him is, That he may reform ; and that I may be the laſt victim to his baseneſs. Perhaps this deſirabie wiſh may be obtained, when he ſhall ſee how his wickedneſs, his unmerited wickedneſs, to a poor creature, made friendleſs by his cruel arts, will end.

I conclude with my humble thanks to your Lady-  
ſhip,

ship, for your favourable opinion of me ; and with the assurance, that I will be, while life is lent me,

*Your Ladyship's grateful and obliged servant,*

**C. HARLOWE.**

## LETTER XIV.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Mrs. NORTON.*

*Sunday Evening, July 2.*

HOW kindly, my beloved Mrs. Norton, do you soothe the anguish of a bleeding heart ! Surely you are my own mamma ; and, by some unaccountable mistake, I must have been laid to a family, that, having newly found out, or at least suspected, the imposture, cast me from their hearts, with the indignation that such a discovery will warrant.

O that I had indeed been your own child, born to partake of your humble fortunes, an heiress only to that content in which you are so happy ! Then should I have had a *truly* gentle spirit to have guided my ductile heart, which force and ungenerous usage fit so ill upon ; and nothing of what has happened would have been.

But let me take heed, that I enlarge not, by impatience, the breach already made in my duty, by my rashness ; since, had I not erred, my *mother*, at least, could never have been thought hard-hearted and unforgiving : — Am I not then answerable, not only for my own faults, but for the consequences of them ; which tend to depreciate and bring disgrace upon a maternal character never before called in question ?

It is kind however in you, to endeavour to extenuate the fault of one so greatly sensible of it : — And could it be wiped off intirely, it would render me more worthy of the pains you have taken in my education : For it must add to your grief, as it does to my confusion, that, after such promising beginnings,

I should have so behaved, as to be a disgrace instead of a credit to you, and my other friends.

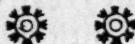
But that I may not make you think me more guilty than I am, give me leave briefly to assure you, that when my story is known, I shall be intitled to more compassion than blame, even on the score of going away with Mr. Lovelace.

As to all that happened afterwards, let me only say, that, altho' I must call myself a lost creature, as to this world, yet have I this consolation left me, that I have not suffered either for want of circumspection, or thro' credulity, or weakness. Not one moment was I off my guard, or unmindful of your early precepts. But (having been enabled to baffle many base contrivances) I was at last ruined by arts the most inhuman. But had I not been rejected by every friend, this low-hearted man had not dared, nor would have had opportunity, to treat me as he has treated me.

More I cannot, at this time, nor need I, say: And this I desire you to keep to yourself, lest resentments should be taken up, when I am gone, that may spread the evil, which I hope will end with me.

I have been misinformed, you say, as to my principal relations being at my uncle Harlowe's. The day, you say, was not kept. Nor have my brother and Mr. Solmes — Astonishing—What complicated wickedness has this wretched man to answer for!— Were I to tell you, you would hardly believe there could have been such a heart in man—

But one day you may know my whole story!— At present I have neither inclination nor words—O my bursting heart!—Yet a happy, a wished relief!— Were you present, my tears would supply the rest!



I RESUME my pen!

And so you fear no letter will be received from me. But DON'T grieve to tell me so! I expect everything

thing bad!—And such is my distress, that had you not bid me hope for mercy from the Throne of Mercy, I should have been afraid, that my father's dreadful curse would be completed, with regard to both worlds.

For, here, an additional misfortune!—In a fit of phrenetical heedlessness, I sent a letter to my beloved Miss Howe, without recollecting her private address; and it is fallen into her angry mother's hands: And so that dear friend perhaps has anew incurred displeasure on my account. And here too, your worthy son is ill; and my poor Hannah, you think, cannot come to me.—O my dear Mrs. Norton, *will* you, *can* you, censure *those* whose resentments against me Heaven seems to approve of? and will you acquit *her* whom *that* condemns?

Yet you bid me not despond.—I will not, if I can help it.—And, indeed, most seasonable consolation has your kind letter afforded me.—Yet to God Almighty do I appeal, to avenge my wrongs, and vindicate my inno—

But hushed be my stormy passions!—Have I not but this moment said, that your letter gave me consolation? — May *those* be forgiven, who hinder my father from forgiving *me*!—And this, as to *them*, shall be the harshest thing that shall drop from my pen.

But altho' your son should recover, I charge you, my dear Mrs. Norton, that you do not think of coming to me. I don't know still, but your mediation with my mother (altho' at present your interposition would be so little attended to) may be of use to procure me the revocation of that most dreadful part of my father's curse, which only remains to be fulfilled. The voice of nature must at last be heard in my favour, surely. It will only plead at first to my friends in the still, conscious plaintiveness of a young and unhardened beggar!—But it will grow more

clamorous when *I* have the courage to be so, and shall demand, perhaps, the paternal protection from further ruin ; and that forgiveness, which those will be little intitled to expect, for their own faults, who shall interpose to have it refused to me, for an *accidental*, not a *premeditated*, error : And which, but for them, I had never fallen into.

But again impatience, founded, perhaps, on self-partiality, that strange misleader ! prevails.

Let me briefly say, that it is necessary to my present and future hopes, that you keep well with my family. And, moreover, should you come, I may be traced out, by your means, by the most abandoned of men. Say not then, that you think you ought to come up to me, *let it be taken as it will* :—For *my sake*, let me repeat (were my foster-brother recovered, as I hope he is), you must *not* come. Nor can I want your advice, while *I* can write, and *you* can answer me. And write I will, as often as I stand in need of your counsel.

Then the people I am now with seem to be both honest and humane : And there is in the same house a widow-lodger, of low fortunes, but of great merit—Almost such another serious and good woman, as the dear one, to whom I am now writing ; who has, as she says, given over all other thoughts of the world, but such as shall assist her to leave it happily.—How suitable to my own views !—There seems to be a comfortable providence in *this*, at least !—So that at present there is nothing of exigence ; nothing that can require, or even excuse, your coming, when so many better ends may be answered by your staying where you are. A time *may* come, when I shall want your last and best assistance : And *then*, my dear Mrs. Norton—And *then*, I will bespeak it, and embrace it with my whole heart—And *then*, will it not be denied me by any-body.

You are very obliging in your offer of money. But altho'

altho' I was forced to leave my cloaths behind me, yet I took several things of value with me, which will keep me from present want. You'll say, I have made a miserable hand of it—So indeed I have!—and, to look backwards, in a very little while too.

But what shall I do, if my father cannot be prevailed upon to recal his grievous malediction?—Of all the very heavy evils wherewith I have been afflicted, this is *now* the heaviest; for I can neither live nor die under it.

O my dear Mrs. Norton, what a weight must a father's curse have upon a mind so apprehensive of it, as mine is!—Did I think I should ever have *this* to deprecate?

But you must not be angry with me, that I wrote not to you before. You are very right, and very kind, to say, You are sure I love you. Indeed I do. And what a generosity is there (so like yourself) in your praise, to attribute to me more than I merit, in order to raise an emulation in me to *deserve* your praises! — You tell me, what you expect from me in the calamities I am called upon to bear. May I but behave answerably!

I can a little account to myself for my silence to you, my kind, my dear maternal friend [how equally sweetly and politely do you express yourself on this occasion!] — I was very desirous, for your sake, as well as for my own, that you should have it to say, that we did not correspond: Had they thought we did, every word you could have dropt in my favour, would have been rejected; and my mother would have been forbid to see you, or to pay any regard to what you should say.

Then I had sometimes better and sometimes worse prospects before me. My worst would only have troubled you to know: My better made me frequently hope, that, by the next post, or the next, and so on for weeks, I should have the best news to

impart to you, that *then* could happen ; cold as the wretch had made my heart to *that Beast*.—For how could I think to write to you, with a confession, that I was not married, yet lived in the house (nor could I help it) with such a man ?—Who likewise had given it out to several, that we were actually married, altho' with restrictions that depended on the reconciliation with my friends ? And to disguise the truth, or be guilty of a falsehood either direct or equivocal, that was what you had never learnt me.

But I might have written to you for advice, in my precarious situation, perhaps you will think. But, indeed, my dear Mrs. Norton, I was not lost for want of advice. And this will appear clear to you, from what I have already hinted, were I to explain myself no further :—For what need had the cruel spoiler to have had recourse to unprecedented arts—I will speak out plainer still (but you must not at present report it) ; to stupefying potions, and to the most brutal and outrageous force ; had I been wanting in my duty ?

A few words more upon this grievous subject—

When I reflect upon all that has happened to me, it is apparent, that this generally-supposed *thoughtless* seducer, has acted by me upon a regular and preconcerted plan of villainy.

In order to set all his vile plots in motion, nothing was wanting from the first, but to prevail upon me, either by force or fraud, to throw myself into his power : And when this was effected, nothing less than the intervention of the paternal authority (which I had not deserved to be exerted in my behalf) could have saved me from the effect of his deep machinations. Opposition from any other quarter would but too probably have precipitated his barbarous and ingrateful violence : And had *you yourself* been with me, I have reason *now* to think, that some-how or other you would have suffered in endeavouring to save me :

For

For never was there, as now I see, a plan of wickedness more steadily and uniformly pursued, than *his* has been, against an unhappy creature, who merited better of *him*: But the Almighty has thought fit, according to the general course of his providence, to make the fault bring on its own punishment: And that, perhaps, in consequence of my father's dreadful imprecation, " That I might be punished *here*" [O my mamma Norton, pray with me, that *here* it stop!] " by the very wretch in whom I had placed " my wicked confidence!"

I am sorry, for your sake, to leave off so heavily. Yet the rest must be brief.

Let me desire you to be secret in what I have communicated to you; at least, till you have my consent to divulge it.

God preserve to you your more faultless child!

I will hope for His mercy, altho' I should not obtain that of any other person.

And I repeat my prohibition:—You must not think of coming up to

*Your ever-dutiful*

CL. HARLOWE.

The obliging person, who left yours for me this day, promised to call to-morrow, to see if I should have any-thing to return. I would not lose so good an opportunity.

## LETTER XV.

*Mrs. NORTON, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.*

*Monday Night, July 3.*

O The barbarous villainy of this detestable man!

And is there a man in the world, who could offer violence to so sweet a creature!

And are you sure you are now out of his reach?

You command me to keep secret the particulars of the vile treatment you have met with; or else, upon an unexpected visit which Miss Harlowe favoured

voured me with, soon after I had received your melancholy letter, I should have been tempted to own I had heard from you, and to have communicated to her such parts of your two letters as would have demonstrated your penitence, and your earnestness to obtain the revocation of your father's malediction, as well as his protection from outrages, that may still be offered to you. But then your sister would probably have expected a sight of the letters, and even to been have permitted to take them with her to the family.

Yet they *must* one day be acquainted with the sad story :—And it is impossible but they must pity you, and forgive you, when they know your early penitence, and your unprecedented sufferings ; and that you have fallen by the brutal force of a barbarous ravisher, and not by the vile arts of a seducing lover.

The wicked man gives it out, at Lord M.'s, as Miss Harlowe tells me, that he is actually married to you :—Yet she believes it not ; nor had I the heart to let her know the truth.

She put it close to me, Whether I had not corresponded with you from the time of your going away ? I could safely tell her (as I did), that I had not : But I said, that I was well informed, that you took extremely to heart your father's imprecation ; and that, if she would excuse me, I would say, it would be a kind and sisterly part, if she would use her interest to get you discharged from it.

Among other severe things, she told me, that my partial fondness for you made me very little consider the honour of the rest of the family : But, if I had not heard this from you, she supposed I was set on by Miss Howe.

She expressed herself with a good deal of bitterness against that young lady : Who, it seems, everywhere, and to every-body (for you must think, that your story is the subject of all conversations), rails against

against your family ; treating them, as your sister says, with contempt, and even with ridicule.

I am sorry such angry freedoms are taken, for two reasons ; first, Because such liberties never do any good. I have heard you own, that Miss Howe has a satirical vein ; but I should hope, that a young lady of her sense, and right cast of mind, must know, that the end of satire is not to exasperate, but amend ; and should never be personal. If it be, as my good father used to say, it may make an impartial person suspect, that the satirist has a natural spleen to gratify ; which may be as great a fault in *him*, as any of those which he pretends to censure and expose in *others*.

Perhaps a hint of this from you, will not be thrown away.

My second reason is, That these freedoms, from so warm a friend to you as Miss Howe is known to be, are most likely to be charged to your account.

My resentments are so strong against this vilest of men, that I dare not touch upon the shocking particulars which you mention, of his baseness. What defence, indeed, could there be against so determined a wretch, after you were in his power ? I will only repeat my earnest supplication to you, that, black as appearances are, you will not despair. Your calamities are exceeding great, but then you have talents proportioned to your trials. This every-body allows.

Suppose the worst, and that your family will not be moved in your favour, your cousin Morden will soon arrive, as Miss Harlowe told me. If he should even be got over to their side, he will however see justice done you ; and then may you live an exemplary life, making hundreds happy, and teaching young ladies to shun the snares in which you have been so dreadfully intangled.

As to the man you have lost, Is an union with such

such a perjured heart as his with such an admirable one as yours, to be wished for? A base, *low-hearted* wretch, as you justly call him, with all his pride of ancestry; and more an enemy to himself, with regard to his present and future happiness, than to you, in the barbarous and ingrateful wrongs he has done you; I need not, I am sure, exhort you to despise such a man as this; since not to be able to do so, would be a reflection upon a sex to which you have always been an honour.

Your moral character is untainted: The very nature of your sufferings, as you well observe, demonstrates *that*. Chear up, therefore, your dear heart, and do not despair: For is it not GOD who governs the world, and permits some things, and directs others, as He pleases? And will he not reward *temporary sufferings*, innocently incurred, and piously supported, with *eternal felicity*? — And what, my dear, is this poor needle's point of *NOW* to a *boundless ETERNITY*?

My heart, however, labours under a double affliction: For my poor boy is very, very bad! — A violent fever! — Nor can it be brought to intermit! — Pray for *him*, my dearest Miss; — for his recovery, if God see fit. — I hope God *will* see fit! — If not (how can I bear to suppose That!) — pray for *me*, that he will give me that patience and resignation, which I have been wishing to you. I am, my dearest young lady,

*Your ever-affectionate*

JUDITH NORTON.

## LETTER XVI.

*Mrs CL. HARLOWE, To Mrs. JUDITH NORTON.*

*Thursday, July 6.*

I Ought not, especially at this time, to add to your afflictions — But yet I cannot help communicating

to you (who now are my *only* soothing friend) a new trouble that has befallen me.

I had but one friend in the world, besides you; and she is utterly displeased with me (*a*): It is grievous, but for one moment, to lie under a beloved person's censure; and this through imputations that affect one's honour and prudence. There are points so delicate, you know, my dear Mrs. Norton, that it is a degree of dishonour to have a vindication of one's self from them appear to be *necessary*. In the present case, my misfortune is, that I know not how to account, but by guess (so subtle have been the workings of the dark spirit I have been unhappily intangled by), for some of the facts that I am called upon to explain.

Miss Howe, in short, supposes she has found a flaw in my character. I have just now received her severe letter: But I shall answer it, perhaps, in better temper, if I first consider yours. For indeed my patience is almost at an end. And yet I ought to consider, *That faithful are the wounds of a friend.* But so *many* things at once! — O, my dear Mrs. Norton, how shall so young a scholar in the school of affliction be able to bear such heavy and such various evils!

But to leave this subject for a while, and turn to our letter.

I am very sorry Miss Howe is so lively in her resentments on my account. I have always blamed her very freely for her liberties of this sort, with my friends. I once had a good deal of influence over her kind heart, and she made all I said a law to her. But people in calamity have but little weight in anything, or with any-body. Prosperity and independence are charming things on this account, that they give force to the counsels of a friendly heart; while

it

(a) See the next Letter.

it is thought insolence in the miserable to advise, or so much as remonstrate.

Yet is Miss Howe an invaluable person : And is it to be expected, that she should preserve the same regard for my judgment, that she had before I forfeited all title to discretion ? With what face can I take upon me to reproach a want of prudence in *her* ? But if I can be so happy as to re-establish myself in her ever-valued opinion, I shall endeavour to enforce upon her your just observations on this head.

You need not, you say, exhort me to despise such a man as him, by whom I have suffered :—Indeed you need not : For I would choose the cruellest death, rather than to be his. And yet, my dear Mrs. Norton, I will own to you, that once I could have loved him—Ingrateful man ! — had he permitted me, I *once* could have loved him. Yet he never deserved my love. And was not this a fault ? But now, if I can but keep out of his hands, and procure the revocation of my father's malediction, it is all I wish for.

Reconciliation with my friends I do not expect ; nor pardon from them ; at least, till in extremity, and as a *viaticum*.

O, my beloved Mrs. Norton, you cannot imagine what I have suffered !—But indeed my heart is broken ! I am sure I shall not live to take possession of that independence, which you think would enable me to atone in some measure for my past conduct.

While this is my opinion, you may believe, I shall not be easy, till I can procure the revocation of that dreadful curse ; and, if possible, a last forgiveness.

I wish to be left to take my own course, in endeavouring to procure this grace. Yet know I not, at present, what that course shall be.

I will write. But to *whom* is my doubt. Calamity has not yet given me the assurance to address myself to my FATHER. My UNCLES (well as they once

once loved me) are hard-hearted. They never had their masculine passions humanized by the tender name of FATHER. Of my BROTHER I have no hope. I have then but my MOTHER, and my SISTER, to whom I can apply.—“ And may I not, “ my dearest Mamma, be permitted to lift up my “ trembling eye, to your all-chearing, and your once “ more than indulgent, your *fond* eye, in hopes of “ seasonable mercy, to the poor sick heart, that “ yet beats with life drawn from your own dearer “ heart? — Especially when pardon only, and not “ restoration, is implored ?”

Yet were I able to engage my mother’s pity, would it not be a means to make *her* still more unhappy, than I have already made her, by the opposition she would meet with, were she to try to give force to that pity?

To my SISTER, then, I think, I will apply — Yet how hard hearted has my sister been! — But I will not ask for protection; and yet I am in hourly dread, that I shall want protection. — All I will ask for, shall be only to be freed from the heavy curse, that has operated as far as it *can* operate, as to *this* life. — And surely, it was passion, and not intention, that carried it so very far, as to the *other*!

But why do I thus add to your distresses? — It is not, my dear Mrs. Norton, that I have so much feeling for my *own* calamity, that I have *none* for yours: Since yours is indeed an addition to my own. But you have one consolation (a very great one) which I have not: — That *your* afflictions, whether respecting your *more* or your *less* deserving child, rise not from any fault of your own.

But what can I do for you more than pray? — Assure yourself, that in every supplication I put up for myself, I will, with equal fervor, remember both you and your son. For I am, and ever will be,

*Your truly sympathizing and dutiful*  
CLARISSA HARLOWE.

## LETTER XVII.

*Miss Howe, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.**Superscribed, For Mrs. RACHEL CLARK, &c.**My dear CLARISSA, Wednesday, July 5.*

I Have at last heard from you from a quarter I little expected.

From my mamma.

She had for some time seen me uneasy and grieving; and justly supposed it was about you. And this morning dropt a hint, which made me conjecture that she must have heard something of you, more than I knew. And when she found that this added to my uneasiness, she owned she had a letter in her hands of yours, dated the 29th of June, directed for me.

You may guess, that this occasion'd a little warmth, that could not be wished for by either.

[It is surprising, my dear, *mighty* surprising ! that, knowing the prohibition I lay under of corresponding with you, you could send a letter for me to our own house : Since it must be fifty to one that it would fall into my mother's hands, as you find it did.]

In short, *she* resented that I should disobey her : I was as much concerned that she should open and with-hold from me *my* letters : And at last she was pleased to compromise the matter with me, by giving up the letter, and permitting me to write to you *once or twice*; *she* to see the contents of what I wrote. For, besides the value *she* has for you, *she* could not but have a great curiosity to know the occasion of so sad a situation, as your melancholy letter shews you to be in.

[But I shall get her to be satisfied with hearing me read what I write ; putting in between hooks, thus [ ], what I intend not to read to her.]

Need I to remind you, Miss Cl. Harlowe, of *three* letters I wrote to you, to none of which I had any answer;

answer ; except to the *first*, and that a few lines only, promising a letter at large ; tho' you were well enough, the day after you received my *second*, to go joyfully back again with him to the vile house ? But more of these by-and-by. I must hasten to take notice of your letter of Wednesday last week ; which you could *contrive* should fall into my mother's hands.

Let me tell you, that that letter has almost broken my heart. Good God ! what have you brought yourself to, Miss Clarissa Harlowe ?—Could I have believed, that after you had escaped from the miscreant (with such mighty pains and earnestness escaped), and after such an attempt as he had made, you would have been prevailed upon, not only to forgive him, but (without being married too) to return with him to that horrid house !—A house I had given you such an account of !—Surprising !—What an intoxicating thing is *this Love* ?—I always feared, that You, even You, were not proof against it.

You your *best self* have not escaped !—Indeed I see not how you could expect to escape.

*What a tale have you to unfold !*—You need not unfold it, my dear : I would have engaged to prognosticate all that has happen'd, had you but told me, that you would once more have put yourself into his power, after you had taken such pains to get out of it.

*Your peace is destroyed !*—I wonder not at it : Since now you must reproach yourself for a credulity so-placed.

*Your intellect is touch'd !*—I am sure my heart bleeds for you : But, excuse me, my dear, I doubt your intellect was touch'd before you left Hamstead ; or you would never have let him find you out there ; or, when he did, suffer him to prevail upon you to turn to the horrid brothel.

I tell you, I sent you *three letters* : The *first* of which, dated the 7th and 8th of June (a) (for it was

wrote

(a) See Vol. iv. p. 328.

wrote at twice), came safe to your hands, as you sent me word by a few lines dated the ninth: Had it not, I should have doubted my own safety; since in it I gave you such an account of the abominable house, and threw such cautions in your way, as to that Tomlinson, as the more surprised me that you could think of going back to it again, after you had escaped from it, and from Lovelace—O my dear!—But nothing now will I ever wonder at!

The second, dated June 10 (a). was given into your own hand at Hamstead, on Sunday the 11th, as you was lying upon a couch, in a strange way, according to my messenger's account of you, bloated, and flush-coloured; I don't know how.

The third was dated the 20th of June (b). Having not heard one word from you since the promising billet of the 9th, I own I did not spare you in it. I ventured it by the usual conveyance, by that Wilson's, having no other: So cannot be sure you received it. Indeed I rather think you might not; because in yours, which fell into my mamma's hands, you make no mention of it: And if you had had it, I believe it would have touch'd you too much, to have been passed by unnoticed.

You have heard, that I have been ill, you say. I had a cold indeed; but it was so slight a one, that it confined me not an hour. But I doubt not, that strange things you have heard, and been told, to induce you to take the step you took. And, till you did take that step (the going back with this villain, I mean), I knew not a more pitiable case than yours:—For every body must have excused you before, who knew how you was used at home, and was acquainted with your prudence and vigilance. But, alas! my dear, we see that the *wisest* people are not to be depended upon, when *Love*, like an *ignis fatuus*, holds up its misleading lights before their eyes.

My

(a) See Vol. v. p. 178.

(b) Ibid. p. 308, 309.

My mother tells me, she sent you an answer, desiring you not to write to me, because it would grieve me. To be sure I am grieved ; exceedingly grieved ; and, disappointed too, you must permit me to say. For I had always thought, that there never was such a woman, at your years, in the world.

But I remember once an argument you held, on occasion of a censure passed in company upon an excellent preacher, who was not a very excellent liver : Preaching and practising, you said, required quite different talents : Which, when united in the same person, made the man a saint ; as wit and judgment going together constituted a genius.

You made it out, I remember, very prettily : But you never made it out, excuse me, my dear, more convincingly, than by that part of your late conduct, which I complain of.

My love for you, and my concern for your honour, may possibly have made me a little of the severest : If you think so, place it to its proper account ; To That love, and to That concern : Which will but do justice, to

*Your afflicted and faithful,*

A. H.

#### POSTSCRIPT.

My mother would not be satisfied without reading my letter herself ; and that before I had fixed my proposed hooks. She knows, by this means, and has excused, our former correspondence.

She indeed suspected it before : And so she very well might ; knowing Me, and knowing my love of You.

She has so much real concern for your misfortunes, that, thinking it will be a consolation to you, and that it will oblige me, she consents that you shall write to me the particulars at large of your sad story : But it is on condition, that I shew her all that has passed between us, relating to yourself and the vilest of men : I have the more cheerfully complied, as the communication cannot be to your disadvantage.

You may therefore write freely, and direct to our own house.

My mother promises to shew me the copy of her letter to you, and your reply to it ; which latter she has but just told me of. She already apologizes for the severity of hers : And thinks the sight of your reply will affect me too much. But having her promise, I will not dispense with it.

I doubt

I doubt hers is severe enough. So I fear you will think mine: But you have taught me never to spare the *fault* for the friend's sake; and that a great error ought rather to be more inexcuseable in the person we value, than in one we are indifferent to; because it is a reflection upon our choice of that person, and tends to a breach of the love of mind; and to expose us to the world for our partiality. To the *love of mind*, I repeat; since it is impossible but the errors of the dearest friend must weaken our inward opinion of that friend; and thereby lay a foundation for future distance, and perhaps disgust.

God grant, that you may be able to clear your conduct *after* you had escaped from Hamstead; as all *before* that time was noble, generous, and prudent: The man a devil, and you a saint! — Yet I hope you can; and therefore expect it from you.

I send by a particular hand. He will call for your answer at your own appointment.

I am afraid this horrid wretch will trace out by the post-offices where you are, if not careful.

To have *Money*, and *Will*, and *Head*, to be a villain, is too much for the rest of the world, when they meet in one man.

## LETTER XVIII.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.*

*Thursday, July 6.*

FEW young persons have been able to give more convincing proofs than myself, how little true happiness lies in the enjoyment of our own wishes.

To produce one instance only of the truth of this observation; What would I have given for weeks past, for the favour of a letter from my dear Miss Howe, in whose friendship I placed all my remaining comfort? Little did I think, that the next letter she would honour me with, should be in such a stile, as should make me look more than once at the subscription, that I might be sure (the name not being written at length) that it was not signed by another A. H. For surely, thought I, this is my sister Arabella's style: Surely Miss Howe (blame me as she pleases in other points) could never repeat so *sharply* upon her friend, words written in the bitterness of spirit, and in the disorder of head; nor remind her, with asperity, and with mingled strokes of wit, of an argument held in the gaiety of an heart elated with prosperous fortunes (as mine

mine then was), and very little apprehensive of the severe turn that argument would one day take against herself.

But what have *I*, sunk in my fortunes; my character forfeited; my honour lost [While *I* know it, I care not *who* knows it]; destitute of friends, and even of hope; What have *I* to do to shew a spirit of repining and expostulation to a dear friend, because she is not *more* kind than a sister? —

I find, by the rising bitterness which will mingle with the gall in my ink, that I am not yet subdued enough to my condition: And so, begging your pardon, that I should rather have formed my expectations of favour from the indulgence you *used* to shew me, than from what I *now deserve* to have shewn me, I will endeavour to give a particular answer to your letter; altho' it will take me up too much time to think of sending it by your messenger to-morrow: He can put off his journey, he says, till Saturday. I will endeavour to have the whole narrative ready for you by Saturday.

But how to defend myself in every thing that has happened, I cannot tell: Since in some part of the time, in which my conduct appears to have been censurable, I was not myself; and to this hour know not all the methods taken to deceive and ruin me.

You tell me, that in your first letter you gave me such an account of the vile house I was in, and such cautions about that Tomlinson, as make you wonder how I could think of going back.

Alas, my dear! I was trick'd, most vilely trick'd back, as you shall hear in its place.

Without knowing the house was so very *vile* a house from your intended information, I disliked the people too much, ever *voluntarily* to have returned to it. But had you really written such cautions about Tomlinson, and the house, as you seem to have *purposed* to do, they must, had they come in time, have

been of infinite service to me. But not one word of either, whatever was your *intention*, did you mention to me, in that *first* of the *three* letters you so warmly TELL ME you did send me. I will inclose it to convince you (a).

But your account of your messenger's delivering to me your second letter, and the description he gives of me, as *lying upon a couch, in a strange way, bloated and flush-coloured, you don't know how*, absolutely puzzles and confounds me.

Lord have mercy upon the poor Clarissa Harlowe! What can this mean!—Who was the messenger you sent? Was he one of Lovelace's creatures too!— Could no-body come near me but that man's confederates, either *setting out so, or made so?*—I know not what to make of any one syllable of this!—Indeed I don't!

Let me see. You say, this was *before* I went from Hamstead!—My intellects had not then been touch'd!—Nor had I ever been surprised by wine (*strange if I had!*): How then could I be found in such a *strange way, bloated, and flush-coloured; you don't know how!*— Yet what a vile, what a hateful figure has your messenger represented me to have made!

But indeed, I know nothing of ANY messenger from you.

Believing myself secure at Hamstead, I staid longer there than I would have done, in hopes of the letter promised me in your short one of the 9th, brought me by my own messenger, in which you undertake to send for and engage Mrs. Townsend in my favour (b).

I wonder'd I heard not from you: And was told you were sick; and, at another time, that your

(a) The letter she incloses was Mr. Lovelace's forged one.  
See Vol. v. p. 94, & seq.

(b) See Vol. v. p. 88.

mother and you had had words on my account, and that you had refused to admit Mr. Hickman's visits upon it : So that I supposed at one time, that you was not *able* to write ; at another, that your mother's prohibition had its *due* force with you. But now I have no doubt, that the wicked man must have intercepted your letter ; and I wish he found not means to *corrupt your messenger* to tell you so strange a story.

It was on Sunday June 11. you say, that the man gave it me. I was at church twice that day with Mrs. Moore. Mr. Lovelace was at her house the while, where he boarded, and wanted to have lodged ; but I would not permit that, tho' I could not help the other. In one of these spaces *it must be* that he had time to work upon the man. You'll easily, my dear, find that out, by inquiring the time of his arrival at Mrs. Moore's, and other circumstances of the *strange way* he pretended to see me in, *on a couch*, and the rest.

Had any-body seen me afterwards, when I was betray'd back to the vile house, struggling under the operation of wicked potions, and robb'd *indeed* of my intellects (for this, as you shall hear, was my dreadful case ! ), I might then, perhaps, have appeared *bloated*, and *flush-coloured*, and *I know not how myself*. But were you to see your poor Clarissa *now* (or even to have seen her at Hamstead, *before* she suffered the vilest of all outrages), you would not think her *bloated*, or *flush-coloured* : Indeed you would not.

In a word, it could not be *me* your messenger saw ; nor (if any-body) who it was can I divine.

I will now, as *briefly* as the subject will permit, enter into the darker part of my sad story : And yet must be somewhat circumstantial, that you may not think me capable of *reserve* or *palliation*. The latter am not conscious that I need. I should be utterly

D 2      inexcuseable,

inexcuseable, were I guilty of the former to you. And yet, if you knew how my heart sinks under the thoughts of a recollection so painful, you would pity me.

As I shall not be able, perhaps, to conclude what I have to write in even two or three letters, I will begin a new one, with my story; and send the whole of it together, altho' written at different periods, as I am able.

Allow me a little pause, my dear, at this place; and to subscribe my self

*Your ever-affectionate and obliged*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

## LETTER XIX.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.*

[Referred to in Vol. V. p. 222.]

*Thursday Night.*

**H**E had found me out at Hamstead: Strangely found me out; for I am still at a loss to know by what means.

I was loth, in my billet of the 9th (a), to tell you so, for fear of giving you apprehensions for me; and besides, I hoped then to have a shorter and happier issue account to you for, thro' your assistance, than I met with.

*She then gives a narrative of all that passed at Hamstead between herself, Mr. Lovelace, Capt. Tomlinson and the women there, to the same effect with that so amply given by Mr. Lovelace.*

Mr. Lovelace, finding all he could say, and all Capt. Tomlinson could urge, ineffectual, to prevail upon me to forgive an outrage so flagrantly premeditated; rested all his hopes on a visit which was to be paid me by Lady Betty Lawrance and Miss Montague.

In my uncertain situation, my prospects all so dark, I knew not to whom I might be obliged to have recourse in the last resort: And as those ladies had the best of characters, insomuch that I had reason to regret, that I had not from the first thrown my self upon their protection (when I had forfeited that of my own friends), I thought

(a) See Vol. V. p. 93, 99.

I would not *shun* an interview with them, though I was too indifferent to their kinsman, to *seek* it, as I doubted not, that one end of their visit would be to reconcile me to him.

On Monday the 12th of June, these pretended ladies came to Hamstead, and I was presented to them, and they to me, by their kinsman.

They were richly dressed, and stuck out with jewels; the pretended Lady Betty's were particularly very fine.

They came in a coach and four, hired, as was confessed, while their own was repairing in town: A pretence made, I now perceive, that I should not guess at the imposture by the want of the real Lady's arms upon it. Lady Betty was attended by her woman, whom she called Morrison; a modest country-looking person.

I had heard, that Lady Betty was a fine woman, and that Miss Montague was a beautiful young lady, genteel, and graceful, and full of vivacity: Such were these impostors; and having never seen either of them, I had not the least suspicion, that they were not the ladies they personated; and being put a little out of countenance by the richness of their dresses, I could not help, fool that I was! to apologize for my own.

The pretended Lady Betty then told me, that her nephew had acquainted them with the situation of affairs between us. And altho' she could not but say, that she was very glad, that he had not put such a slight upon his Lordship and them, as report had given them cause to apprehend (the reasons for which report, however, she much approved of); yet it had been matter of great concern to her, and to her niece Montague, and would to the whole family, to find so great a misunderstanding subsisting between us, as, if not made up, might distance all their hopes.

She could easily tell who was in fault, she said.—And gave him a look both of anger and disdain; asking him, How it was possible for him to give an offence of *such* a nature to so charming a lady (so she called me), as should occasion a resentment so strong?

He pretended to be awed into shame and silence.

My dearest niece, said she, and took my hand (I must call you niece, as well from love, as to humour your un-

cle's laudable expedient), permit me to be, not an advocate, but a mediatrix for him ; and not for his sake, so much as for my own, my Charlotte's, and all our family's. The indignity he has offered to you, may be of too tender a nature to be inquired into. But as he declares, that it was not a premeditated offence ; whether, my dear (for I was going to rise upon it in my temper), it were or not ; and as he declares his sorrow for it (and never did creature express a deeper sorrow for any offence than he !); and as it is a reparable one ; let *Us*, for this one time, forgive him ; and thereby lay an obligation upon this man of errors—Let *US*, I say, my dear : For, Sir (turning to him), an offence against such a peerless lady as This, must be an offence against *me*, against your *cousin*, here ; and against *all the virtuous* of our Sex.

See, my dear, what a creature he had picked out ! Could you have thought there was a woman in the world who could thus express herself, and yet be vile ? But she had her principal instructions from him, and those written down too, as I have reason to think : For I have recollect'd since, that I once saw this Lady Betty (who often rose from her seat, and took a turn to the other end of the room with such emotion as if the joy of her heart would not let her sit still) take out a paper from her stays, and look into it, and put it there again. She might oftener, and I not observe it ; for I little thought, that there could be such impostors in the world.

I could not forbear paying great attention to what she said. I found tears ready to start ; I drew out my handkerchief, and was silent. I had not been so indulgently treated a great while by a person of character and distinction (such I thought her), and durst not trust to the accent of my voice.

The pretended Miss Montague joined in, on this occasion ; and, drawing her chair close to me, took my other hand, and besought me to forgive her cousin ; and consent to rank myself as one of the principals of a family, that had long, very long, coveted the honour of my alliance.

I am ashamed to repeat to you, my dear, now I know what wretches they are, the tender, the obliging, and the respectful things I said to them.

The wretch himself then came forward. He threw himself at my feet. How was I beset!—The women grasping one my right hand, the other my left: The pretended Miss Montague pressing to her lips more than once the hand she held: The wicked man on his knees, imploring my forgiveness; and setting before me my happy and my unhappy prospects, as I should forgive or not forgive him. All that he thought would affect me in his former pleas, and those of Capt. Tomlinson, he repeated. He vowed, he promised, he bespoke the pretended ladies to answer for him; and they engaged their honours in his behalf.

Indeed, my dear, I was distressed, perfectly distressed. I was sorry that I had given way to this visit. For I knew not how, in tenderness to relations (as I thought them) so worthy, to treat so freely as he deserved, a man nearly allied to them: — So that my arguments, and my resolutions, were deprived of their greatest force.

I pleaded, however, my application to you. I expected every hour, I told them, an answer from you to a letter I had written, which would decide my future destiny.

They offered to apply to you yourselves in person, in *their own behalf*, as they politely termed it. They besought me to write to you to hasten your answer.

I said, I was sure, that you would write the moment that the event of an application to be made to a third person enabled you to write.—But as to the success of their requests in behalf of their kinsman, That depended not upon the expected answer; for *that*, I begged their pardon, was out of the question. I wished him well. I wished him happy. But I was convinced, that I neither could make *him* so, nor *he me*.

Then, again, how the wretch promised!—How he vowed!—How he intreated!—And how the women pleaded! And they engaged themselves, and the honour of their whole family, for his just, his kind, his tender behaviour to me.

In short, my dear, I was so hard set, that I was obliged to come to a more favourable compromise with them, than I had intended. I would wait for your answer to my letter, I said: And if it made doubtful or difficult

the change of measures I had resolved upon, and the scheme of life I had formed, I would then consider of the matter; and, if they would permit me, lay all before them, and take their advice upon it, in conjunction with yours, as if the one were my own aunt, and the other were my own cousin.

They shed tears upon this---Of joy they called them---But since, I believe, to their credit, bad as they are, that they were tears of temporary remorse; for the pretended Miss Montague turned about, and, as I remember, said, There was no standing it.

But Mr. Lovelace was not so easily satisfied. He was fixed upon his villainous measures perhaps; and so might not be sorry to have a pretence against me. He bit his lip---He had been but too much used, he said, to such indifference, such coldness, in the very midst of his happiest prospects---I had on twenty occasions, shewn him, to his infinite regret, that any favour I was to confer upon him was to be the result of---There he stopt---And not of my choice.

This had like to have set all back again. I was exceedingly offended. But the pretended ladies interposed. The elder severely took him to task. He ought, she told him, to be satisfied with what I had said. She desired no other condition. And what, Sir, said she, with an air of authority, would you commit errors, and expect to be rewarded for them?

They then engaged me in more agreeable conversation ---The pretended Lady declared, that she, Lord M. and Lady Sarah, would directly and personally interest themselves to bring about a general reconciliation between the two families, and this either in open or private concert with my uncle Harlowe, as should be thought fit. Animosities on one side had been carried a great way, she said; and too little care had been shewn on the other to mollify or heal. My father should see, that they could treat him as a brother and a friend; and my brother and sister should be convinced, that there was no room either for the jealousy or envy they had conceived from motives too unworthy to be avowed.

Could I help, my dear, being pleased with them?---

Permit

Permit me here to break off. The task grows too heavy, at present, for the heart of

*Your CLARISSA HARLOWE.*

## LETTER XX.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE; In Continuation.*

I WAS very ill, and obliged to lay down my pen. I thought I should have fainted. But am better now—So will proceed.

The pretended Ladies, the more we talked, seemed to be the fonder of me. And *The Lady Betty* had Mrs. Moore called up; and asked her, If she had accommodations for her niece and self, her woman, and two men-servants, for three or four days?

Mr. Lovelace answered for her, that she had.

She would not ask her dear niece Lovelace [*Permit me, my dear, whispered she, this charming style before strangers! --I will keep your uncle's secret*] whether she should be welcome or not to be so near her. But for the time she should stay in these parts, she would come up every night---What say you, niece Charlotte?

The pretended Charlotte answered, she should like to do so, of all things.

*The Lady Betty* called her an obliging girl. She liked the place, she said. Her cousin Leeson would excuse her. The air, and my company, would do her good. She never chose to lie in the smoaky town, if she could help it. In short, my dear, said she to me, I will stay till you hear from Miss Howe; and till I have your consent to go with me to Glenham-Hall. Not one moment will I be out of your company, when I can have it. Stedman my solicitor, as the distance from town is so small, may attend me here for instructions. Niece Charlotte, one word with you, child.

They retired to the farther end of the room, and talked about their night-dresses.

*The Miss Charlotte* said, Morrison might be dispatched for them.

True, *the other* said:--But she had some letters in

her private box, which she must have up. And you know, Charlotte, that I trust nobody with the keys of that.

Could not Morrison bring up that box?

No. She thought it safest where it was. She had heard of a robbery committed but two days ago, at the foot of Hamstead-hill ; and she should be ruined, if she lost her box.

Well then, it was but going to town to undress, and she would leave her jewels behind her, and return ; and should be the easier a great deal on all accounts.

For my part, I wondered they came up with them. But that was to be taken as a respect paid to me. And then they hinted at another visit of ceremony which they had thought to make, had they not found me so inexplicably engaging.

They talked loud enough for me to hear them ; on purpose, no doubt, tho' in affected whispers ; and concluded with high praises of me.

I was not fool enough to believe, or to be puffed up with their encomiums ; yet not suspecting them, I was not displeased at so favourable a beginning of acquaintance with ladies (whether I were to be related to them or not) of whom I had always heard honourable mention. And yet at the time, I thought, highly as they exalted *me*, that in some respects (tho' I hardly knew in what) they fell short of what I expected *them* to be.

The grand deluder was at the farther end of the room, another way ; probably to give me an opportunity to hear these preconcerted praises---looking into a book, which, had there not been a preconcert, would not have taken his attention for one moment. It was *Taylor's Holy Living and Dying*.

When the pretended ladies joined me, he approached me, with it in his hand---A smart book, This, my dear ! ---This old divine affects, I see, a mighty flowery stile upon a very solemn subject. But it puts me in mind of an ordinary country funeral, where the young women, in honour of a defunct companion, especially if she were a virgin, or passed for such, make a flower-bed of her coffin.

And then, laying down the book, turning upon his heel,

heel, with one of his usual airs of gaiety, And are you determined, Ladies, to take up your lodgings with my charming creature?

Indeed they were:

Never were there more cunning, more artful impostors, than these women. Practised creatures, to be sure: Yet genteel; and they must have been well-educated---Once, perhaps, as much the delight of their parents, as I was of mine: And who knows by what arts ruined, body and mind!--O my dear! how pregnant is this reflection!

But the *man*!--Never was there a man so deep! Never so consummate a deceiver! except that detested Tomlinson; whose years, and seriousness, joined with a solidity of sense and judgment, that seemed uncommon, gave him, one would have thought, advantages in villainy, the other had not time for. Hard, very hard, that I should fall into the knowlege of two such wretches; when two more such I hope are not to be met with in the world:---Both so determined to carry on the most barbarous and perfidious projects against a poor young creature, who never did or wished harm to either!

Take the following slight account of these womens and of this man's behaviour to each other before me.

Mr. Lovelace carried himself to his pretended aunt with high respect, and paid a great deference to all she said. He permitted her to have all the advantage over him in the repartees and retorts that passed between them. I could, indeed, easily see, that it *was* permitted; and that he forbore that *acumen*, that quickness, which he never spared shewing to the pretended Miss Montague; and which a man of wit seldom knows how to spare shewing, when an opportunity offers to display his wit.

The pretended Miss Montague was still more reverent in her behaviour to her aunt. While the aunt kept up the dignity of the character she had assumed, railing both of them with the air of a person who depends upon the superiority which years and fortune give over younger persons; who might have a view to be obliged to her, either in her life, or at her death.

The severity of her railing, however, was turned upon Mr. Lovelace, on occasion of the character of the

people who kept the lodgings, which, she said, I had thought my self so well warranted to leave privately.

This startled me. For having then no suspicion of the vile Tomlinson, I concluded (and your letter of the 7th (*a*) favoured my conclusions), that if the house were notorious, either he, or Mr. Mennell, would have given me or him some hints of it---Nor, altho' I liked not the people, did I observe any thing in them very culpable, till the Wednesday night before, that they offered not to come to my assistance, altho' within hearing of my distress (as I am sure they were), and having as much reason to be frightened as I, at the fire, had it been real.

I looked with indignation upon Mr. Lovelace, at this hint.

He seemed abashed. I have not patience, but to recollect the specious looks of this vile deceiver. But how was it possible, that even this florid countenance of his should enable him to command a blush at his pleasure? For blush he did, more than once: And the blush, on this occasion, was a deep-dyed crimson, unstrained-for, and natural, as I thought---But he is so much of the actor, that he seems able to enter into any character; and his muscles and features appear intirely under obedience to his wicked will (*b*).

The pretended Lady went on, saying, She had taken upon herself to inquire after the people, on hearing that I had left the house in disgust; and tho' she heard not any thing much amis<sup>e</sup>, yet she heard enough to make her wonder, that he would carry his spouse, a person of so much delicacy, to a house, that, if it had not a *bad* fame, had not a *good* one.

You must think, my dear, that I liked the pretended Lady Betty the better for this. I suppose it was designed I should.

He

(*a*) His forged letter. See Vol. V. p. 94.

(*b*) It is proper to observe, that there was a more natural reason than this that the lady gives, for Mr. Lovelace's blushing. It was a blush of indignation, as he owned afterwards to his friend Belford, in conversation; for his pretended aunt had mistaken her cue, in condemning the house; and he had much ado to recover the blunder; being obliged to follow her lead, and vary from his first design; which was, To have the people of the house spoken well of, in order to induce her to return to it, were it but on pretence to direct her cloaths to be carried to Hamstead.

He was surprised, he said, that her Ladyship should hear a bad character of the people. It was what he had never before heard that they deserved. It was easy, indeed, to see, that they had not very great delicacy, tho' they were not indelicate. The nature of their livelihood, letting lodgings, and taking people to board (and yet he had understood that they were nice in these particulars), led them to aim at being free and obliging : And it was difficult, he said, for persons of cheerful dispositions, so to behave, as to avoid censure : Openness of heart and countenance in the Sex (more was the pity!) too often subjected good people, whose fortunes did not set them above the world, to uncharitable censure.

He wished, however, that her Ladyship would tell *what* she had heard : Altho' now it signified but little, because he would never ask me to set foot within their doors again : And he begged she would not mince the matter.

Nay, no great matter, she said. But she had been informed, that there were more women lodgers in the house than men : Yet that their visitors were more men than women. And this had been hinted to her (perhaps by ill-willers, she could not answer for that) in such a way, as if somewhat further were meant by it, than was spoken.

This, he said, was the true innuendo way of characterizing, used by detractors. Every-body and every-thing had a black and a white side, as ill-willers and well-willers were pleased to report. He had observed, that the front house was well lett, and he believed, more to the one sex, than to the other ; for he had seen, occasionally passing to and fro, several genteel modest-looking women ; and who, it was very probable, were not so ill-beloved, but they might have visitors and relations of both sexes : But they were none of them any-thing to us, or we to them : We were not once in any of their companies : But in the genteest and most retired house of the two, which we had in a manner to ourselves, with the use of a parlour to the street, to serve us for a servants hall, or to receive common visitors, or our traders only, whom we admitted not up-stairs.

He always loved to speak as he found. No man in  
the

the world had suffered more from calumny than he himself had done.

Women, he owned, ought to be more scrupulous than men needed to be where they lodged. Nevertheless, he wished, that fact, rather than surmise, were to be the foundation of their judgments, especially when they spoke of one another.

He meant no reflection upon her Ladyship's informants, or rather *surmisants* (as he might call them), be they who they would: Nor did he think himself obliged to defend characters impeached, or not thought well of, by women of virtue and honour. Neither were these people of importance enough to have so much said about them.

The pretended Lady Betty said, All who knew her would clear her of censoriousness: That it gave her some opinion, she must needs say, of the people, that he had continued there so long with me; that I had rather *negative* than *positive* reasons of dislike to them and that so shrewd a man, as she heard Capt. Tomlinson was, had not objected to them.

I think, niece Charlotte, proceeded she, as my nephew has not parted with these lodgings, you and I (for as my dear Miss Harlowe *dislikes* the people, I would not ask *her* for her company) will take a dish of tea with my nephew there, before we go out of town, and then we shall see what sort of people they are. I have heard that Mrs. Sinclair is a mighty forbidding creature.

With all my heart, Madam. In your *Ladyship's* company I shall make no scruple of going any-whither.

It was *Ladyship* at every word; and as she seemed proud of her title, and of her dress too, I might have guessed that she was not used to *either*.

What say *you*, cousin Lovelace? Lady Sarah, tho' melancholy woman, is very inquisitive about all your affairs. I must acquaint her with every particular circumstance when I go down.

With all his heart. He would attend her whenever she pleased. She would see very handsome apartments and very civil people.

The duce is in them, said *The Miss Montague*, if they appear other to us.

They then fell into family-talk : Family-happiness on my hoped-for accession into it. They mentioned Lord M.'s and Lady Sarah's great desire to see me. How many friends and admirers, with up-lift hands, I should have ! [O my dear, what a triumph must these creatures, and he, have over the poor Devoted all the time!]—What a happy man he would be—They would not, *The Lady Betty* said, give themselves the mortification but to suppose, that I should not be one of Them !

Presents were hinted at. She resolved that I should go with her to Glenham-Hall. She would not be refused, altho' she were to stay a week beyond her time for me.

She long'd for the expected letter from you. I must write to hasten it, and to let Miss Howe know how every thing stood since I wrote last. That might dispose me absolutely in *their* favour, and in her nephew's; and then she hoped there would be no occasion for me to think of entering upon any new measures.

Indeed, my dear, I did at the time intend, if I heard not from you by morning, to dispatch a man and horse to you, with the particulars of *all*, that you might (if you thought proper), at least, put off Mrs. Townsend's coming up to another day.—But I was miserably prevented.

She made me promise, that I would write to you upon this subject, whether I heard from you, or not. One of her servants should ride post with my letter, and wait for Miss Howe's answer.

She then launched out in deserved praises of you, my dear. How fond should she be of the honour of your acquaintance !

The pretended Miss Montague joined in with her, as well for herself as for her sister.

Abominably well-instructed were they both.

O my dear ! What risques may poor giddy girls run, when they throw themselves out of the protection of their natural friends, and into the wide world ?

They then talked again of reconciliation and intimacy with every one of my friends ; with my mother particularly ; and gave the dear good lady the praises that every one gives her, who has the happiness to know her.

Ah,

Ah, my dear Miss Howe! I had almost forgot my resentments against the pretended nephew!—So many agreeable things said, made me think, that, if you should advise it, and if I could bring my mind to forgive the wretch for an outrage so premeditatedly vile, and could forbear despising him for that and his other ingrateful and wicked ways, I might not be unhappy in an alliance with such a family. Yet, thought I at the time, With what intermixtures does every thing come to me, that has the appearance of good!—However, as my lucid hopes made me see fewer faults in the behaviour of these pretended Ladies, than recollection and abhorrence have helped me since to see, I began to reproach myself, that I had not at first thrown myself into their protection.

But amidst all these delightful prospects, I must not, said *The Lady Betty*, forget that I am to go to town.

She then ordered her coach to be got to the door—We will all go to town together, said she, and return together. Morrison shall stay here, and see every thing as I used to have it, in relation to my apartment, and my bed; for I am very particular in some respects. My cousin Leeson's servants can do all I want to be done with regard to my night-dresses, and the like. And it will be a little airing for you, my dear, and a good opportunity for Mr. Lovelace to order what you want of your apparel to be sent from your former lodgings to Mrs. Leeson's; and we can bring it up with us from thence.

I had no intention to comply. But as I did not imagine that she would insist upon my going to town with them, I made no answer to that part of her speech.

I must here lay down my tired pen!

Recollection! Heart-affecting Recollection! How pains me!

## LETTER XXI.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss Howe.*

**I**N the midst of these agreeablenesses, the coach came to the door. The pretended Lady Betty besought me to give them my company to their cousin Leeson

I desired to be excused : Yet suspected nothing. She would not be denied. How happy would a visit so condescending make her cousin Leeson !—Her cousin Leeson was not unworthy of my acquaintance : And would take it for the greatest favour in the world.

I objected my dress. But the objection was not admitted. She bespoke a supper of Mrs. Moore to be ready at nine.

Mr. Lovelace, vile hypocrite, and wicked deceiver, seeing, as he said, my dislike to go, desired her Ladyship not to insist upon it.

Fondness for my company was pleaded. She begged me to oblige her : Made a motion to help me to my fan herself : And, in short, was so very urgent, that my feet complied against my speech, and my mind : And, being in a manner, led to the coach by her, and made to step in first, she followed me ; and her pretended niece, and the wretch, followed her : And away it drove.

Nothing but the height of affectionate complaisance assed all the way : Over and over, What a joy would his unexpected visit give her cousin Leeson ! What a pleasure must it be to such a mind as mine, to be able to give so much joy to every-body I came near !

The cruel, the savage seducer (as I have since recollect) was in rapture all the way ; but yet such a sort of rapture, as he took visible pains to check.

Hateful villain !—How I abhor him !—What mischief must be then in his plotting heart !—What a devoted victim must I be in all their eyes !

Though not pleased, I was nevertheless just then noughtless of danger ; they endeavouring thus to lift me up above all apprehension of that, and above myself too.

But think, my dear, what a dreadful turn all had upon me, when, through several streets and ways I knew nothing of, the coach, slackening its pace, came within sight of the dreadful house of the dreadfulest woman the world ; as she proved to me.

Lord be good unto me ! cry'd the poor fool, looking out of the coach—Mr. Lovelace !—Madam ! turning to the pretended aunt—Madam ! turning to the niece, my eyes and hands lifted up—Lord be good unto me !

What ! What ! What, my dear !

He pulled the string—What need to have come this way? said he.—But since we are, I will but ask a question.—My dearest life! why this apprehension?

The coachman stopp'd: His servant, who, with one of hers was behind, alighted—Ask, said he, if I have any letters?—Who knows, my dearest creature, turning to me, but we may already have one from the Captain?—We will not go out of the coach!—Fear nothing—Why so apprehensive?—Oh! these fine spirits!—cry'd the execrable insulter.

Dreadfully did my heart then misgive me: I was ready to faint.—Why this terror, my life?—You shall not stir out of the coach!—But one question, now the fellow has drove us this way!

Your lady will faint! cry'd the execrable Lady Betty, turning to him.—My dearest niece! I will call you, taking my hand, we must alight, if you are so ill.—Let us alight—Only for a glass of water and hartshorn—Indeed we must alight.

No, no, no—I am well—Quite well—Won't the man drive on?—I am well—quite well—Indeed I am.—Man, drive on, putting my head out of the coach—Man, drive on!—tho' my voice was too low to be heard.

The coach stopp'd at the door. How I trembled!

Dorcas came to the door, on its stopping.

My dearest creature! said the vile man, gasping, as it were for breath, you shall not alight—Any letters for me, Dorcas?

There are two, Sir. And here is a gentleman, Mr. Belton, Sir, waits for your Honour; and has done so above an hour.

I'll just speak to him. Open the door—You sha'n't step out, my dear—A letter, perhaps, from the Captain already!—You sha'n't step out, my dear.

I sighed, as if my heart would burst.

But we must step out, nephew: Your lady will faint—Maid, a glass of hartshorn and water!—My dear, you must step out.—You will faint, child—We must cut your laces.—[I believe my complexion was all manner of colours by turns]—Indeed, you must step out, my dear.

He knew, he said; I should be well, the moment the coach drove from the door. I should *not* alight. By his soul, I should not.

Lord, Lord, nephew, Lord, Lord, cousin, both women in a breath, What ado you make about nothing!—You *persuade* your lady to be afraid of alighting!—See you not, that she is just fainting?

Indeed, Madam, said the vile seducer, my dearest love must not be moved in this point against her will!—I beg it may not be insisted upon.

Fiddle-faddle, foolish man!—What a pothe is here!—I gues how it is: You are ashamed to let us see, what sort of people you carried your lady among!—But do you go out, and speak to your friend, and take your letters.

He stept out; but shut the coach-door after him, to oblige me.

The coach may go on, Madam! said I.

The coach *shall* go on, my dear life, said he—But he gave not, nor intended to give, orders that it should.

Let the coach go on! said I—Mr. Lovelace may come after us.

Indeed, my dear, you are ill!—Indeed you must alight!—Alight but for one quarter of an hour!—Alight but to give order yourself about your things. Whom can you be afraid of, in my company, and my niece's?—These people must have behaved shockingly to you!—Please the Lord, I'll inquire into it!—I'll see what sort of people they are!

Immediately came the old creature to the door. A thousand pardons, dear Madam, stepping to the coach-side, if we have any-way offended you!—Be pleased, Ladies (to the other two), to alight.

Well, my dear, whispered the Lady Betty, I now find, that an hideous description of a person we never saw, is an advantage to them. I thought the woman was a monster! But, really, she seems tolerable.

I was afraid I should have fallen into fits: But still refused to go out—Man!—Man!—Man! cry'd I, gaspingly, my head out of the coach and in, by turns, half a dozen times running, drive on!—Let us go!

My heart misgave me beyond the power of my own account-

accounting for it ; for still I did not suspect these women. But the antipathy I had taken to the vile house, and to find myself so near it, when I expected no such matter, with the sight of the old creature, all together, made me behave like a distracted person.

The hartshorn and water was brought. The pretended lady Betty made me drink it. Heaven knows if there were any thing else in it !

Besides, said she, whisperingly, I must see what sort of creatures the *nieces* are. Want of delicacy cannot be hid from me. You could not surely, my dear, have this aversion to re-enter a house, for a few minutes, in our company, in which you lodged and boarded several weeks, unless these women could be so presumptuously vile, as my nephew ought not to know.

Out stepped the pretended lady ; the servant, at her command, having opened the door.

Dearest Madam, said the other, let me follow you (for I was next the door.) Fear nothing : I will not stir from your presence.

Come, my dear, said the pretended Lady : Give me your hand ; holding out hers. Oblige me this once !

I will bleſs your footsteps, said the old creature, if once more you honour my house with your presence.

A croud by this time was gathered about us ; but I was too much affected to mind that.

Again the pretended Miss Montague urged me (standing up as ready to go out if I would give her room). Lord, my dear, said she, who can bear this croud ?—What will people think ?

The pretended Lady again pressed me, with both her hands held out—Only, my dear, to give orders about your things.

And thus pressed, and gazed at (for then I looked about me), the women so richly dressed, people whispering ; in an evil moment, out stepp'd I, trembling, forced to lean with both my hands (frighted too much for ceremony) on the pretended Lady Betty's arm—O that I had dropped down dead upon the guilty threshold !

We shall stay but a few minutes, my dear !—but a few minutes ! said the same specious jilt—out of breath with her

her joy, as I have since thought, that they had thus triumphed over the unhappy victim!

Come, Mrs. Sinclair, I think your name is, shew us the way—following her, and leading me. I am very thirsty. You have frightened me, my dear, with your strange fears. I must have tea made, if it can be done, in a moment. We have further to go, Mrs. Sinclair, and must return to Hamstead this night.

It shall be ready in a moment, cry'd the wretch. We have water boiling.

Hasten, then—Come, my dear, to me, as she led me through the passage to the fatal inner house—Lean upon me—How you tremble!—how you falter in your steps!—Dearest niece Lovelace (the old wretch being in hearing), why these hurries upon your spirits?—We'll begone in a minute.

And thus she led the poor sacrifice into the old wretch's too well-known parlour.

Never was any-body so gentle, so meek, so low-voiced, as the odious woman; drawling out, in a puling accent, all the obliging things she could say: Awed, I then thought, by the conscious dignity of a woman of quality; glittering with jewels.

The called-for tea was ready presently.

There was no Mr. Belton, I believe: For the wretch went not to any-body, unless it were while we were parlying in the coach. No such person, however, appeared at the tea-table.

I was made to drink two dishes, with milk, complaisantly urged by the pretended Ladies helping me each to one. I was stupid to their hands; and, when I took the tea, almost choaked with vapours; and could hardly swallow.

I thought, transiently thought, that the tea, the last dish particularly, had an odd taste. They, on my palating it, observed, that the milk was *London milk*; far short in goodness of what they were accustomed to from their own dairies.

I have no doubt, that my two dishes, and perhaps my hartshorn, were prepared for me; in which case it was more proper for their purpose, that they should help me, than

than that I should help *myself*. Ill before, I found myself still more and more disordered in my head; a heavy torpid pain increasing fast upon me. But I imputed it to my terror.

Nevertheless, at the pretended Ladies motion, I went up stairs, attended by Dorcas; who affected to weep for joy, that once more she saw my *blessed* face, that was the vile creature's word; and immediately I set about taking out some of my cloaths, ordering what should be put up, and what sent after me.

While I was thus employed, up came the pretended Lady Betty, in a hurrying way—My dear, you won't be long before you are ready. My nephew is very busy in writing answers to his letters: So, I'll just whip away, and change my dress, and call upon you in an instant.

O Madam!—I *am* ready! I am *now* ready!—You must not leave me here: And down I funk, affrighted, into a chair.

This instant, this instant, I will return—Before you can be ready—Before you can have packed up your things—We would not be late—The robbers we have heard of may be out—Don't let us be late.

And away she hurried before I could say another word. Her pretended niece went with her, without taking notice to me of her going.

I had no suspicion yet, that these women were not indeed the Ladies they personated; and I blamed myself for my weak fears.—It cannot *be*, thought I, that *such* Ladies will abet treachery against a poor creature they are so fond of. They must undoubtedly *be* the persons they *appear* to be—What folly to doubt it! The air, the dress, the dignity, of women of quality.—How unworthy of them, and of my charity, concluded I, is this ungenerous shadow of suspicion!

So, recovering my stupified spirits, as well as they could be recovered (for I was heavier and heavier; and wondered to Dorcas, what ailed me; rubbing my eyes, and taking some of her snuff, pinch after pinch, to very little purpose), I pursued my employment: But when that was over, all packed up that I designed to be packed up; and I had nothing to do but to *think*; and found them

them tarry so long; I thought I should have gone distract'd. I shut myself into the chamber that had been mine; I kneeled, I prayed; yet knew not what I prayed for: Then ran out again: It was almost dark night, I said: Where, where, was Mr. Lovelace?

He came to me, taking no notice at first of my consternation and wildness (What they had given me made me incoherent and wild): All goes well, said he, my dear!—A line from Captain Tomlinson!

All indeed did go well for the villainous project of the most cruel and most villainous of men!

I demanded his aunt!—I demanded his cousin!—The evening, I said, was closing!—My head was very, *very* bad, I remember, I said.—And it grew worse and worse.

Terror, however, as yet kept up my spirits; and I insisted upon his going himself to hasten them.

He called his servant. He raved at the *sex* for their delay: 'Twas well that business of consequence seldom depended upon such parading, unpunctual triflers!

His servant came.

He ordered him to fly to his cousin Leeson's; and to let his aunt and cousins know how uneasy we both were at their delay: Adding, of his own accord, Desire them, they don't come instantly, to send their coach, and we will go without them. Tell them I wonder they'll serve me so!

I thought this was considerately and fairly put. But now, indifferent as my head was, I had a little time to consider the man, and his behaviour. He terrified me with his looks, and with his violent emotions, as he gazed upon me. Evident *joy-suppressed* emotions, as I have since recollect'd. His sentences short, and pronounced as if his breath were touched. Never saw I such abominable eyes look, as then they looked—Triumph in them!—Fierce and wild; and more disagreeable than the womens at the vile house appeared to me, when I first saw them: And at times, such a leering, mischief-*oding* cast!—I would have given the world to have been a hundred miles from him. Yet his behaviour was decent—A decency, however, that I might have seen to be struggled for—for he snatched my hand two or three

times, with a vehemence in his grasp that hurt me; speaking words of tenderness through his shut teeth, as it seemed; and let it go, with a beggar-voic'd humble accent, like the vile woman's just before; half-inward; yet his words and manner carrying the appearance of strong and almost convulsed passion! — O my dear! What mischiefs was he not then meditating!

I complained once or twice of thirst. My mouth seemed parched. At the time, I supposed, that it was my terror (gasping often as I did for breath) that parched up the roof of my mouth. I called for water: Some table-beer was brought me: Beer, I suppose, was a better vehicle (if I were not dosed enough before) for their potions. I told the maid, That she knew I seldom tasted malt-liquor: Yet, suspecting nothing of this nature, being extremely thirsty, I drank it, as what came next: And instantly, as it were, found myself much worse than before; as if inebriated, I should fancy: I know not how.

His servant was gone twice as long as he needed: And, just before his return, came one of the pretended Lady Betty's, with a letter for Mr. Lovelace.

He sent it up to me. I read it: And then it was that I thought myself a lost creature; it being to put off her going to Hamstead that night, on account of violent fits which Miss Montague was pretended to be seized with: For then immediately came into my head his vile attempt upon me in this house; the revenge that my flight might too probably inspire him with on that occasion, and because of the difficulty I made to forgive him, and to be reconciled to him; his very looks wild, and dreadful to me; and the women of the house such as I had more reason than ever, even from the pretended Lady Betty's hints, to be afraid of: All these crowding together in my apprehensive mind, I fell into a kind of phrensy.

I have not remembrance how I was, for the time it lasted: But I know, that, in my first agitations, I pulled off my head-dress, and tore my ruffles in twenty tatters; and ran to find him out.

When a little recovered, I insisted upon the hint he had given of their coach. But the messenger, he said, had told him, that it was sent to fetch a physician, lest his chariot should be put up, or not ready.

I then insisted upon going directly to Lady Betty's lodgings.

Mrs. Leeson's was now a crowded house, he said: And as my earnestness could be owing to nothing but groundless apprehension [And O what vows, what protestations of his honour did he then make!], he hoped I would not add to their present concern. Charlotte, indeed, was used to fits, he said, upon any great surprises, whether of joy or grief; and they would hold her for a week together, if not got off in a few hours.

You are an *observer of eyes*, my dear, said the villain; perhaps in secret insult: Saw you not in Miss Montague's now-and-then, at Hamstead, something wildish? — I was afraid for her then — Silence and quiet only do her good: Your concern for *her*, and her love for *you*, will but augment the poor girl's disorder, if you should go.

All impatient with grief and apprehension, I still declared myself resolved not to stay in that house till morning. All I had in the world, my rings, my watch, my little money, for a coach! or, if one were not to be got, I would go on foot to Hamstead that night, tho' I walked it by myself.

A coach was hereupon sent for, or pretended to be sent for. Any priece, he said, he would give to oblige me, late as it was; and he would attend me with all his soul.—But no coach was to be got.

Let me cut short the rest. I grew worse and worse in my head; now stupid, now raving, now senseless. The vilest of vile women was brought to frighten me. Never was there so horrible a creature as she appeared to me at the time.

I remember, I pleaded for mercy—I remember that I said *I would be his*—Indeed *I would be his*—to obtain his mercy—But no mercy found I!—My strength, my intellects, failed me!—And then such scenes followed—O my dear, such dreadful scenes!—Fits upon fits (faintly indeed, and imperfectly remembered) procuring me no compassion—But death was with-held from me. That would have been too great a mercy!

Thus was I tricked and deluded back by blacker hearts of my own sex, than I thought there were in the world;

who appeared to me to be persons of honour: And, when in his power, thus barbarously was I treated by this villainous man!

I was so senseless, that I dare not averr, that the horrid creatures of the house were personally aiding and abetting: But some visionary remembrances I have of female figures, flitting, as I may say, before my sight; the wretched woman's particularly. But as these confused ideas might be owing to the terror I had conceived of the worse than masculine violence she had been permitted to assume to me, for expressing my abhorrence of her house; and as what I suffered from his barbarity wants not that aggravation; I will say no more on a subject so shocking as this must ever be to my remembrance.

I never saw the personating wretches afterwards. He persisted to the last (dreadfully invoking heaven as a witness to the truth of his assertion), that they were really and truly the Ladies they pretended to be; declaring, that they could not take leave of me, when they left the town, because of the state of senselessness and phrensy I was in. For their intoxicating, or rather stupefying, potions, had almost deleterious effects upon my intellects, as I have hinted; insomuch that, for several days together, I was under a strange delirium; now moping, now dozing, now weeping, now raving, now scribbling, tearing what I scribbled, as fast as I wrote it: Most miserable when now-and-then a ray of reason brought confusedly to my remembrance what I had suffered.

## LETTER XXII.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE; In Continuation.*

THE Lady next gives an account,

Of her recovery from her phrenical and sleepy <sup>dis</sup>orders:

Of her attempt to get away in his absence:

Of the conversations that followed, at his return, between them:

Of the guilty figure he made:

Of her resolution not to have him:

Of her several efforts to escape:

Of her treaty with Dorcas, to assist her in it :

Of Dorcas's dropping the promisory note, undoubtedly, as she says, on purpose to betray her :

Of her triumph over all the creatures of the house, assembled to terrify her ; and perhaps to commit fresh outrages upon her :

Of his setting out for M. Hall :

Of his repeated letters to induce her to meet him at the altar, on her uncle's anniversary :

Of her determined silence to them all :

Of her second escape, effected, as she says, contrary to her own expectation : That attempt being at first but the intended prelude to a more promising one, which she had formed in her mind :

*And of other particulars; which being to be found in Mr. Lovelace's preceding letters, and that of his friend Belford, are omitted. She then proceeds :*

The very hour that I found myself in a place of safety, I took pen to write to you. When I began, I designed only to write six or eight lines, to inquire after your health : For, having heard nothing from you, I feared indeed, that you bad been, and still were, too ill to write. But no sooner did my pen begin to blot the paper, but my sad heart hurried it into length. The apprehensions I had lain under, that I should not be able to get away ; the fatigue I had in effecting my escape ; the difficulty of procuring a lodging for myself ; having disliked the people of two houses, and those of a third disliking me ; for you must think I made a frightened appearance — These, together with the recollection of what I had suffered from him, and my farther apprehensions of my insecurity, and my desolate circumstances, had so disordered me, that I remember I rambled strangely in that letter.

In short, I thought it, on re-perusal, a half-distracted one : But I then despaired (were I to begin again) of writing better : So I let it go : And can have no excuse for directing it as I did, if the cause of the incoherence in it will not furnish me with a very pitiable one.

The letter I received from your mother was a dreadful blow to me. But nevertheless, it had the good effect upon me (labouring, as I was just then, under a violent

fit of vapourish despondency, and almost yielding to it) which profuse bleeding and blisters have in paralytical or apoplectical strokes ; reviving my attention, and restoring me to spirits to combat the evils I was surrounded by — Sluicing off, and diverting into a new chanel (if I may be allowed another metaphor), the overcharging woes, which threatened once more to overwhelm my intellects.

But yet, I most sincerely lamented (and still lament), in your mamma's words, *That I cannot be unhappy by myself*: And was grieved, not only for the trouble I had given you before ; but for the new one I had brought upon you by my inattention.

*She then gives the contents of the letters she wrote to Mrs. Norton, to Lady Betty Lawrence, and to Mrs. Hodges; as also of their answers; whereby she detected all Mr. Lovelace's impostures.*

I cannot, however, says she, forbear to wonder how the vile Tomlinson could come at the knowlege of several of the things he told me of, and which contributed to give me confidence in him (a).

I doubt not, continues she, that the stories of Mrs. Fretchville, and her house, would be found as vile impostures as any of the rest, were I to inquire ; and had I not enough, and too much, already against the perjured man.

How have I been led on ! says she — What will be the end of such a false and perjured creature ; Heaven not less profaned and defied by him, than myself deceived and abused ! This, however, against myself I must say, That if what I have suffered is the natural consequence of my first error, I never can forgive *myself*, although you are so partial in my favour, as to say, that I was not censurable for what passed before my first escape.

And now, honoured Madam, and my dearest Miss Howe, who are to sit in judgment upon my case, permit me to lay down my pen, with one request, which, with the greatest earnestness, I make to you both : And that

(a) The attentive reader need not be referred back for what the lady nevertheless could not account for, as she knew not that Mr. Lovelace had come at Miss Howe's letters ; particularly that in vol. iv. p. 31, which he comments upon p. 131.

is, That you will neither of you open your lips in relation to the potions and the violences I have hinted at.—Not that I am solicitous, that my disgrace should be hidden from the world, or that it should not be generally known, that the man has proved a villain to me: For this, it seems, every-body but myself expected from his character. But suppose, as his actions by me are really of a *capital nature*, it were insisted upon, that I should appear to prosecute him, and his accomplices, in a Court of Justice, how do you think I could bear That?

But since my character, *before* the capital enormity, was lost in the eye of the world; and That from the very hour I left my father's house; and since all my own hopes of worldly happiness are intirely over; Let me slide quietly into my grave; and let it not be remembred, except by one friendly tear, and no more, dropt from your gentle eye, my own dear Anna Howe, on the happy day that shall shut up all my sorrows, that there was such a creature as

Saturday, July 8.

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

### LETTER XXIII.

*Miss Howe, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.*

Sunday, July 9.

MAY heaven signalize its vengeance, in the face of all the world, upon the most abandoned and profligate of men!—And in its own time, I doubt not but it will.—And we must look to a WORLD BEYOND THIS, for the reward of your sufferings!—

Another shocking detection, my dear!—How have you been deluded!—Very watchful I have thought you; very sagacious:—But, alas! not watchful, not sagacious enough, for the horrid villain you have had to deal with!—

The letter you sent me inclosed as mine, of the 7th of June, is a villainous forgery (*a*). The hand, indeed, is astonishingly like mine; and the cover, I see, is actually my cover: But yet the letter is not so exactly imitated, but that (had you had any suspicions about his vileness at the time) you, who so well know my hand, might have detected it.

In short, this vile forged letter, tho' a long one, contains but a few extracts from mine. Mine was a very long one. He has omitted every thing, I see, in it, that could have shewn you what a detestable house the house is; and given you suspicions of the vile Tomlinson.—You will see this, and how he has turned Miss Lardner's information, and my advices to you [execrable villain!] to his own horrid ends, by the rough draught of the genuine letter, which I shall inclose (*a*).

Apprehensive for both our safeties, from such a daring and profligate contriver, I must call upon you, my dear, to resolve upon taking legal vengeance of the infernal wretch. And this not only for our own sakes, but for the sakes of innocents, who otherwise may yet be deluded and outraged by him.

*She then gives the particulars of the report made by the young fellow whom she sent to Hamstead with her letter; and who supposed he had delivered it into her own hand (*b*); and then proceeds:*

I am astonished, that the vile wretch, who could know nothing of the time my messenger (whose honesty I can vouch for) would come, could have a creature ready to personate you! Strange, that the man should happen to arrive just as you were gone to church, as I find was the fact, on comparing what he says, with your hint that you were at church twice that day; when he might have got to Mrs. Moore's two hours before!—But had you told me, my dear, that the villain had found you out, and was about you!—You should have done that—Yet I blame you upon a judgment founded on the *event only!*

I never had any faith in the stories that go current among country girls, of spectres, familiars, and demons; yet I see not any other way to account for this wretch's successful villainy, and for his means of working-up his specious delusions, but by supposing (if he be not the devil himself), that he has a familiar constantly at his elbow. Sometimes it seems to me, that this familiar assumes the shape of that solemn villain Tomlinson:

Some-

(*a*) See Vol. IV. p. 328.

(*b*) Vol. V. p. 178.

Sometimes that of the execrable Sinclair, as he calls her : Sometimes it is permitted to take that of Lady Betty Lawrence—But, when it would assume the angelic shape and mien of my beloved friend, see what a bloated figure it made !

'Tis my opinion, my dear, that you will be no longer safe where you are, than while the V. is in the country. Words are poor!—or how could I execrate him ! I have hardly any doubt, that he has sold himself for a time, O may the time be short !—Or may his infernal prompter no more keep covenant with him, than he does with others !

I inclose not only the rough draught of my long letter mentioned above ; but the heads of that which the young fellow thought he delivered into your own hands at Hamstead. And, when you have perused them, I will leave you to judge, how much reason I had to be surprised, that you wrote me not an answer to either of those letters ; one of which you owned you had received (tho' it proved to be his forged one) ; the other delivered into your own hands, as I was assured ; and both of them of so much concern to your honour ; and still how much more surprised I must be, when I received a letter from Mrs. Townsend, dated June 15. from Hamstead, importing, " That Mr. Lovelace, who had been with you several days, had, on the Monday before, brought his aunt and cousin, richly dressed, and in a coach and four, to visit you : Who, with your own consent, had carried you to town with them—to your former lodgings ; where you still were : That the Hamstead women believed you to be married ; and reflected upon me as a fomenter of differences between man and wife : That he himself was at Hamstead the day before ; viz. Wedn. the 14th ; and boasted of his happiness with you ; inviting Mrs. Moore, Mrs. Bevis, and Miss Rawlins, to go to town, to visit his spouse ; which they promised to do : That he declared, that you were intirely reconciled to your former lodgings :—And that, finally, the women at Hamstead told Mrs. Townsend, that he had very handsomely discharged theirs."

I own to you, my dear, that I was so much surprised

and disgusted at these appearances, against a conduct till then unexceptionable, that I was resolved to make myself as easy as I could, and wait till you should think fit to write to me. But I could rein-in my impatience but for a few days; and on the 20th of June I wrote a sharp letter to you; which I find you did not receive.

What a fatality, my dear, has appeared in your case, from the very beginning till this hour! Had my mother permitted—

But can I blame *her*; when you have a *father* and *mother* living, who have so much to answer for?—So much!—as no father and mother, considering the child they have driven, persecuted, exposed, renounced—ever had to answer for!—

But again I must execrate the abandoned villain—Yet, as I said before, *all* words are poor, and beneath the occasion!

But see we not, in the horrid perjuries and treachery of this man, what rakes and libertines will do, when they get a young creature into their power? It is probable, that he might have the intolerable presumption to hope an easier conquest: But, when your unexampled vigilance and exalted virtue made potions, and rapes, and the utmost violences, necessary to the attainment of his detestable end, we see that he never boggled at them. I have no doubt, that the same or equal wickedness would be *oftener* committed by men of this villainous cast, if the folly and credulity of the poor inconfiderates who throw themselves into their hands, did not give them an easier triumph.

With what comfort must those parents reflect upon these things, who have happily disposed of their daughters in marriage to a virtuous man! And how happy the young women, who find themselves safe in a worthy protection!—If such a person, as Miss Clarissa Harlowe could not escape, who can be secure?—Since, tho' every rake is not a LOVELACE, neither is every woman a CLARISSA: And his attempts were but proportioned to your resistance and vigilance.

My mother has commanded me to let you know her thoughts upon the whole of your sad story. I will do

it in another letter; and send it to you with this, by a special messenger.

But, for the future, if you approve of it, I will send my letters by the usual hand (Collins's) to be left at the Saracen's head on Snow-hill: Whither you may send yours (as we both used to do, to Wilson's), except such as we shall think fit to transmit by the post: Which I am afraid, after my next, must be directed to Mr. Hickman, as before: Since my mother is for fixing a condition to our correspondence, which, I doubt, you will not comply with, tho' I wish you would. This condition I shall acquaint you with by-and-by.

Mean time, begging excuse for all the harsh things in my last, I beseech you, my dearest creature, to believe me to be,

*Your truly sympathizing,  
and unalterable Friend,*

ANNA HOWE.

## LETTER XXIV.

*Miss Howe, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.*

Monday, July 10.

I NOW, my dearest friend, resume my pen, to obey my mother, in giving you her opinion upon your unhappy story.

She still harps upon the old string, and will have it, that all your calamities are owing to your first fatal step; for she believes (what I cannot), that your relations had intended, after one general trial more, to comply with your aversion, if they had found it as rivetted a one, as let me say, it was a folly to suppose it would not be found to be, after so many *ridiculously* repeated experiments.

As to your latter sufferings from that vilest of miscreants, she is unalterably of opinion, that if all be as you have related (which she doubts not), with regard to the potions, and to the violences you have sustained, you ought, by all means, to set on foot a prosecution against him, and his devilish accomplices.

She asks, What murderers, what ravishers, would be

brought to justice, if *modesty* were to be a general plea, and allowable, against appearing in a court to prosecute?

She says, that the good of society requires, that such a beast of prey should be hunted out of it: And, if you do not prosecute him, she thinks you will be answerable for all the mischiefs he may do in the course of his future villainous life.

Will it be thought, Nancy, said she, that Miss Harlowe can be in earnest, when she says, she is not solicitous to have her disgraces concealed from the world, if she is afraid or ashamed to appear in court, to do justice to herself and her sex against him? Will it not be rather surmised, that she may be apprehensive, that some weakness, or lurking love, will appear upon the trial of the strange cause? If, inferred she, such complicated villainy as this (where perjury, potions, forgery, subornation, are all combined to effect the ruin of an innocent creature, and to dishonour a family of eminence, and where those very crimes, as may be supposed, are proofs of her innocence) is to go off impunely, what case will deserve to be brought into judgment; or what malefactor ought to be hanged?

Then she thinks, and so do I, that the vile creatures, his accomplices, ought by all means to be brought to condign punishment, as they must and will be, upon bringing him to his tryal: And this may be a means to blow up and root out a whole nest of vipers, and save many innocent creatures.

She added, That, if Miss Clarissa Harlowe could be so indifferent about having this public justice done upon such a wretch, for her *own* sake, she ought to overcome her scruples out of regard to her family, her acquaintance, and her sex, which are all highly injured and scandalized by his villainy to her.

For her own part, she declares, That were *she* your mother, she would forgive you upon no other terms: And, upon your compliance with these, she herself will undertake to reconcile all your family to you.

These, my dear, are my mother's sentiments upon your sad story.

I can-

I cannot say, but there are reason and justice in them : And it is my opinion, that it would be very right for the Law to oblige an injured woman to prosecute, and to make seduction on the man's part capital, where his studied baseness, and no fault in her will, appeared.

To this purpose, the custom in the Isle of Man is a very good one—

' If a single woman there prosecutes a single man for a rape, the ecclesiastical judges impanel a jury ; and, if this jury finds him guilty, he is returned guilty to the temporal courts : Where, if he be convicted, the deemster, or judge, delivers to the woman a Rope, a Sword, and a Ring ; and she has it in her choice to have him hanged, beheaded, or to marry him.'

One of the two former, I think, should always be her option.

I long for the full particulars of your story. You must have but too much time upon your hands, for a mind so active as yours, if tolerable health and spirits be afforded you.

The villainy of the worst of men, and the virtue of the most excellent of women, I expect will be exemplified in it, were it to be written in the same connected and particular manner, that you used to write to me in.

Try for it, my dearest friend ; and since you cannot give the example without the warning, give both, for the sakes of all those who shall hear of your unhappy fate ; beginning from yours of June 5. your prospects then not disagreeable. I pity you for the task, tho' I cannot willingly exempt you from it.



My mother will have me add, That she must insist upon your prosecuting. She repeats, that she makes that a condition on which she permits our future correspondence.—So let me know your thoughts upon it. I asked her, If she would be willing, that I should appear to support you in court, if you complied ?—By all means, she said, if that would induce you to begin with him, and with the horrid women. I think, I could attend you, I am sure I could, were there but a probability of bringing the monster to his deserved end.

Once more your thoughts of it, supposing it were to meet with the approbation of your relations.

But whatever be your determination on this head, it shall be my constant prayer, That God will give you patience to bear your heavy afflictions, as a person ought to do, whose faulty will has not brought them upon herself; that He will speak peace and comfort to your wounded mind; and give you many happy years.

I am, and ever will be,

*Your affectionate and faithful*

ANNA HOWE.

*The two preceding letters were sent by a special messenger;  
In the cover were written the following lines.*

Monday, July 10.

I CANNOT, my dearest friend, suffer the inclosed to go unaccompanied by a few lines, to signify to you, that they are both less tender in some places, than I would have written, had they not been to pass my mamma's inspection. The principal reason, however, of my writing thus separately, is, To beg of you to permit me to send you money and necessaries; which you must needs want: And that you will let me know, if either I, or *any-body I can influence*, can be of service to you. I am excessively apprehensive, that you are not enough out of his reach where you are. Yet London, I am persuaded, is the place of all others, to be private in.

I could tear my hair for vexation, that I have it not in my power to afford you *personal protection!*—I am,

*Your ever-devoted,*

ANNA HOWE.

## LETTER XXV.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss Howe.*

Tuesday, July 11.

I APPROVE, my dearest friend, of the method you prescribe for the conveyance of our letters; and have already caused the porter of the inn to be engaged to bring

bring to me yours, the moment that Collins arrives with them : As the servant of the house where I am, will be permitted to carry mine to Collins for you.

As you are so earnest to have all the particulars of my sad story before you, I will, if life and spirits be lent me, give you an ample account of all that has befallen me, from the time you mention. But this, it is very probable, you will not see, till after the close of my last scene : And as I shall write with a view to that, I hope no other voucher will be wanted for the veracity of the writer.

I am far from thinking myself out of the reach of this man's further violence. But what can I do ? Whither can I fly ?—Perhaps my bad state of health (which must grow worse, as recollection of the past evils, and reflections upon them, grow heavier and heavier upon me) may be my protection. Once, indeed, I thought of going abroad ; and had I the prospect of many years before me, I would go.—But, my dear, the blow is given.—Nor have you reason, now, circumstanced as I am, to be concerned, that it is. What a heart must I have, if it be not broken !—And, indeed, my *dear*, my *best*, I had almost said my *only* friend, I do so earnestly wish for the last closing scene, and with so much comfort find myself in a declining way, that I even sometimes ingratefully regret that naturally healthy constitution, which used to double upon me all my enjoyments.

As to the earnestly recommended prosecution, I may possibly touch upon it more largely hereafter, if ever I shall have better spirits ; for they are at present extremely sunk and low.—But, just now, will only say, that I would sooner suffer every evil (the repetition of the capital one excepted), than appear publicly in a court to do myself justice (*a*). And I am heartily grieved, that your mother prescribes such a measure, as the condition of our future correspondence.—For, the continuance of your friendship, my dear, and the desire I had to correspond with you to my life's end, were all my remaining hopes and conso-

(*a*) Dr. Lewin, as will be seen hereafter, presses her to this public prosecution, by arguments worthy of his character : Which she answers a manner worthy of hers.

consolation. Nevertheless, as that friendship is in the power of the heart, not of the *band* only, I hope I shall not forfeit that.

O my dear ! what weight has a parent's curse—You cannot imagine—But I will not touch this string to you, who never loved them !—A reconciliation with them is not be hoped for !

I have written a letter to Miss Rawlins of Hamstead ; the answer to which, just now received, has helped me to the knowlege of the vile contrivance, by which this wicked man got your letter of June the 10th. I will give you the contents of both.

In mine to her, I briefly acquaint her “ with what  
“ had befallen me, thro' the vileness of the women who  
“ had been passed upon me, as the aunt and cousin of  
“ the wickedest of men ; and own, that I never was  
“ married to him. I desire her to make particular in-  
“ quiry, and to let me know, who it was at Mrs. Moore's,  
“ that on Sunday afternoon, June 11. while I was at  
“ church, received a letter from Miss Howe, pretending  
“ to be me, and lying on a couch :—Which letter, had  
“ it come to my hands, would have saved me from ruin.  
“ I excuse myself (from the delirium, which the bar-  
“ barous usage I had received, threw me into, and from  
“ a confinement as barbarous and illegal), that I had not  
“ before applied to Mrs. Moore, for an account of what  
“ I was indebted to her : Which I now desired. And  
“ for fear of being traced by Mr. Lovelace, I directed  
“ her to superscribe her answer, To Mrs. Mary Atkins  
“ to be left till called for, at the Bell-Savage Inn, or  
“ Ludgate-Hill.

In her answer, she tells me, “ that the vile wret-  
“ ched prevailed upon Mrs. Bevis to personate me. A sudde-  
“ n motion of his, it seems, on the appearance of you  
“ messenger ;—persuaded to lie along on a couch :  
“ handkerchief over her neck and face ; pretending  
“ to be ill ; drawn in, by false notions of your ill offi-  
“ ce to keep up a variance between a man and his wife  
“ and so taking the letter from your messenger as me.  
“ Miss Rawlins takes pains to excuse Mrs. Bevis's  
“ tention. She expresses their astonishment and conce-

" at what I communicate : But is glad, however, and  
" so they are all, that they know in time the vileness  
" of the base man ; the two widows and herself having,  
" at his earnest invitation, designed me a visit at Mrs.  
" Sinclair's ; supposing all to be happy between him and  
" me ; as he assured them was the case. Mr. Lovelace,  
" she informs me, had handsomely satisfied Mrs. Moore.  
" And Miss Rawlins concludes with wishing to be fa-  
" voured with the particulars of so extraordinary a story,  
" as they may be of use, to let her see what wicked  
" creatures (women as well as men) there are in the  
" world."

I thank you for the draughts of your two letters which were intercepted by this horrid man. I see the great advantage they were of to him, in the prosecution of his villainous designs against the poor wretch, whom he has so long made the sport of his abhorred inventions.

Let me repeat, that I am quite sick of life ; and of an earth, in which *innocent* and *benevolent* spirits are sure to be considered as *aliens*, and to be made sufferers, by the genuine sons and daughters of that earth.

How unhappy, that those letters only which could have acquainted me with his horrid views, and armed me against them, and against the vileness of the base women, should fall into his hands !—Unhappier still, in that my very escape to Hamstead, gave him the opportunity of receiving them !

Nevertheless, I cannot but still wonder, how it was possible for that Tomlinson to know what passed between Mr. Hickman and my uncle Harlowe (*a*) : A circumstance, which gave that vile impostor most of his credit with me.

How the wicked wretch himself could find me out at Hamstead, must also remain wholly a mystery to me. He *may* glory in his contrivances—He, who has more wickedness than wit, *may* glory in his contrivances !—But, after all, I shall, I humbly presume to hope, be happy, when he, poor wretch, will be—Alas !—who can say what !—

Adieu, my dearest friend !—May *you* be happy !—And then your Clarissa Harlowe cannot be wholly miserable !

## LETTER

(*a*) See the note at the bottom of p. 76.

## LETTER XXVI.

*Miss Howe, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.**Wedn. Night, July 12.*

I WRITE, my dearest creature, I cannot *but* write, to express my concern on your dejection. Let me beseech you, my charming excellence, let me beseech you, not to give way to it.

Comfort yourself, on the contrary, in the triumphs of a virtue unsullied; a will wholly faultless. Who could have withstood the trials that you have surmounted? — Your cousin Morden will soon come. He will see justice done you, I make no doubt, as well with regard to what concerns your person as your estate. And many happy days may you yet see; and much good may you still do, if you will not heighten unavoidable accidents into guilty despondency.

But why, my dear, this pining solicitude continued after a reconciliation with relations as unworthy as implacable; whose wills are governed by an all-grasping brother, who finds his account in keeping the breach open? On this over-solicitude, it is now plain to me, that the vilest of men, built all his schemes. He saw you had a thirst after it, beyond all reason for hope. The view, the hope, I own, extremely desirable, had your family been Christians; or even had they been Pagans, who had bowels.

I shall send this short letter (I am obliged to make it a short one) by young Rogers, as we call him; the fellow I sent to you to Hamstead; an innocent, tho' pragmatical rustic. Admit him, I pray you, into your presence, that he may report to me, how you look, and how you are.

Mr. Hickman should attend you; but I apprehend, that all his motions, and my own too, are watched by the execrable wretch: As indeed his are by an agent of mine; for I own, that I am so apprehensive of his plots and revenge, now I know, that he has intercepted my vehement letters against him, that he is the subject of my dreams, as well as of my waking fears.

Mr



My mother, at my earnest importunity, has just given me leave to write, and to receive your letters—But fastened this condition upon the concession, that yours must be under cover to Mr. Hickman (this with a view, I suppose, to give him consideration with me); and upon this further condition, that she is to see all we write.—‘When ‘girls are set upon a point,’ she told one, who told me again, ‘it is better for a mother, if possible, to make ‘herself of their party, rather than to oppose them; since ‘there will be then hopes, that she will still hold the ‘reins in her own hands.’

Pray let me know what the people are with whom you lodge?—Shall I send Mrs. Townsend to direct you to lodgings, either more safe, or more convenient for you?

Be pleased to write to me by Rogers; who will wait on you for your answer, at your own time.

Adieu, my dearest creature. Comfort *yourself*, as you would, in the like unhappy circumstances, comfort

*Your own*

ANNA HOWE.

## LETTER XXVII.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss Howe.*

*Thursday, July 13.*

I AM extremely concerned, my dear Miss Howe, for being primarily the occasion of the apprehensions you have of this wicked man’s vindictive attempts. What a wide-spreading error is mine!—

If I find, that he sets on foot any machination against you, or Mr. Hickman, I do assure you I will consent to prosecute him, altho’ I were sure I should not survive my first appearance at the Bar he should be arraigned at.

I own the justice of your mother’s arguments on that subject; but must say, that I think there are circumstances in my particular case, which will excuse me, altho’ (on slighter occasion than *that* above apprehended) I should decline to appear against him. I have said, that I may one day enter more particularly into this subject.

*Your*

Your messenger has now indeed seen me. I talked with him on the imposture put upon him at Hamstead: And am sorry to have reason to say, that had not the poor young man been very *simple*, and very *self-sufficient*, he had not been so groily deluded. Mrs. Bevis has the same plea to make for herself. A good-natured, thoughtless woman; not used to converse with so vile and so specious a deceiver, as him, who made his advantage of both these shallow creatures.

I think I cannot be more private, than where I am. I hope I am safe. All the risque I run, is in going out, and returning from morning prayers; which I have two or three times ventured to do; once at Lincolns-Inn chapel, at eleven; once at St. Dunstan's Fleet-street, at seven in the morning, in a chair both times; and twice at six in the morning, at the neighbouring church in Covent-garden. The wicked wretches I have escaped from, will not, I hope, come to church to look for me; especially at so early prayers; and I have fixed upon the privatest pew in the latter church to hide myself in; and perhaps I may lay out a little matter in an ordinary gown, by way of disguise; my face half hid by my mob.—I am very careless, my dear, of my appearance now. Neat and clean, takes up the whole of my attention.

The man's name, at whose house I lodge, is Smith—A glove-maker, as well as *seller*. His wife is the shop-keeper. A dealer also in stockens, ribbands, snuff, and perfumes. A matron-like woman, plain-hearted, and prudent. The husband an honest, industrious man. And they live in good understanding with each other. A proof with me, that their hearts are right; for where a married couple live together upon ill terms, it is a sign, I think, that each knows something amis of the other, either with regard to temper or morals, which if the world knew as well as themselves, it would as little like them, as such people like each other. Happy the marriage, where neither man nor wife has any wilful or premeditated evil in their general conduct to reproach the other with!—For even persons who have bad hearts, will have a veneration for those who have good ones.

Two neat rooms, with plain but clean furniture, on the first floor, are mine; one they call the dining-room.

There is, up another pair of stairs, a very worthy widow-lodger, Mrs. Lovick by name; who, altho' of low fortunes, is much respected, as Mrs. Smith assures me, by people of condition of her acquaintance for her piety, prudence, and understanding. With her I propose to be well acquainted.

I thank you, my dear, for your kind, your seasonable advice and consolation. I hope I shall have more grace given me, than to despond, in the *religious* sense of the word: Especially, as I can apply to myself the comfort you give me, that neither my will, nor my inconsiderateness, has contributed to my calamity. But nevertheless, the irreconcileableness of my relations, whom I love with an unabated reverence; my apprehensions of fresh violences (This wicked man, I doubt, will not yet let me rest); my destituteness of protection; my youth, my sex, my unacquaintedness with the world, subjecting me to insults; my reflections on the scandal I have given, added to the sense of the indignities I have received from a man, of whom I deserved not ill; all together will undoubtedly bring on the effect, that cannot be undesirable to me:—The flower, however, perhaps from my natural good constitution; and, as I presume to imagine, from principles which I hope will, in due time, and by due reflection, set me *above the sense of all worldly disappointments*.

At present, my head is much disordered. I have not indeed enjoyed it with any degree of clearness, since the violence done to that, and to my heart too, by the wicked arts of the abandoned creatures I was cast among.

I must have more conflicts. At times I find myself not subdued enough to my condition. I will welcome those conflicts as they come, as *probationary ones*—But yet my father's malediction—Yet I hope even that may be made of so much use to me, as to cause me to *double my attention to render it ineffectual*.

All I will at present add, are my thanks to your mother for her indulgence to us. Due compliments to Mr. Hickman; and my request, that you will believe me to be,

be, to my last hour, and beyond it, if possible, my beloved friend, and my dearer Self (for what is now my Self?)

*Your obliged and affectionate*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

## LETTER XXVIII.

*Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;*

*Friday, July 7.*

I HAVE three of thy letters at once before me to answer; in each of which thou complainest of my silence; and in one of them tellest me, that thou canst not live unless I scribble to thee every day, or every other day at least.

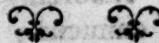
Why, then, die, Jack, if thou wilt. — What heart, thinkest thou, can I have to write, when I have lost the only subject worth writing upon?

Help me again to my Angel, to my CLARISSA; and thou shalt have a letter from me, or writing at least, part of a letter, every hour. All that the charmer of my heart shall say, that will I put down: Every motion, every air of her beloved person, every look, will I try to describe; and when she is silent, I will endeavour to tell thee her thoughts, either what they are, or what I'd have them to be—So that, having her, I shall never want a subject. Having lost her, my whole soul is a blank: The whole creation round me, the elements above, beneath, and every thing I behold (for nothing can I enjoy) is a blank without her!

O Return, Return, thou dear charmer of my soul! Return to thy adoring Lovelace! What is the light, what the air, what the town, what the country, what's anything, without thee? Light, air, joy, harmony, in my notion, are but parts of thee; and could they be all expressed in one word, that word would be CLARISSA.

O my beloved CLARISSA, Return thou then; once more Return to bless thy LOVELACE, who now, by the loss of thee, knows the value of the jewel he has slighted;

and rises every morning but to curse the sun, that shines upon every body but him !



WELL but, Jack, 'tis a surprising thing to me, that the dear fugitive cannot be met with ; cannot be heard of. She is so poor a plotter (for plotting is not her talent), that I am confident, had I been at liberty, I should have found her out before now ; altho' the different emissaries I have employed about town, round the adjacent villages, and in Miss Howe's vicinage, have hitherto failed of success. But my Lord continues so weak and low-spirited, that there is no getting from him. I would not disoblige a man whom I think in danger still : For would his gout, now it has got him down, but give him, like a fair boxer, the rising-blow, all would be over with him. And here (pox of his fondness for me ! it happens at a very bad time) he makes me sit hours together entertaining him with my rogueries (a pretty amusement for a sick man !) : And yet, whenever he has the gout, he prays night and morning with his chaplain. But what must *his* notions of religion be, who, after he has nosed and mumbled over his responses, can give a sigh or groan of satisfaction, as if he thought he had made up with heaven ; and return with a new appetite to my stories ?—Encouraging hem, by shaking his sides with laughing at them, and calling me a sad fellow in such an accent, as shews he takes no small delight in his kinsman.

The old Peer has been a sinner in his day, and suffers or it now : A sneaking sinner, *sliding*, rather than *rushing*, into vices, for fear of his reputation : Or, rather, for fear of detection, and positive proof ; for these sort of fellows, Jack, have no real regard for reputation.—Laying for what he never had, and never daring to rise to the joy of an enterprize at first hand, which could bring him within view of a tilting, or of the honour of being considered as the principal man in a court of justice.

To see such an old Trojan as this, just dropping into the grave, which I hoped ere this would have been dug, and filled up with him ; crying out with pain, and grunting with weakness ; yet in the same moment crack his leatherne

leathern face into an horrible laugh, and call a young sinner charming varlet, encoueing him, as formerly he used to do the Italian eunuchs ; what a preposterous, what an unnatural adherence to old habits !

My two cousins are generally present when I entertain, as the old peer calls it. Those stories must drag horribly, that have not more hearers and applauders, than relaters.

*Applauders ! —*

Ay, Belford, *Applauders*, repeat I ; for altho' these girls pretend to blame me sometimes for the *facts*, they praise my manner, my invention, my intrepidity. — Besides, what other people call *blame*, that call I *praise* : I ever did ; and so I very early discharged *shame*, that cold-water damper to an enterprising spirit.

These are smart girls ; they have life and wit ; and yesterday, upon Charlotte's raving against me upon a related enterprize, I told her, that I had had it in debate several times, whether she were or were not too near of kin to me : And that it was once a moot point with me, whether I could not love her dearly for a month, or so : And perhaps it was well for her, that another pretty little puss started up, and diverted me, just as I was entering upon the course.

They all three held up their hands and eyes at once. But I observed, that tho' the girls exclaimed against me, they were not so angry at this plain speaking, as I have found my beloved upon hints so dark, that I have wondered at her quick apprehension.

I told Charlotte, That, grave as she pretended to be in her *smiling* resentments on this declaration, I was sure I should not have been put to the expence of above two or three stratagems (for nobody admired a good invention more than she), could I but have disentangled her conscience from the embarrasses of consanguinity.

She pretended to be highly displeased : So did her sister for her : I told her, that she seemed as much in earnest, as if she had thought *me* so ; and *dared* the trial. Plain words, I said, in these cases, were more shocking to their sex than gradatim actions. And I bid Patty not be displeased at my distinguishing her sister ; since I had a great respect for *her* likewise.

An Italian air, in my usual careless way, a half-struggled for kiss from me, and a shrug of the shoulder by way of admiration, from each pretty cousin, and Sad, sad fellow, from the old Peer, attended with a side-shaking laugh, made us all friends.

There, Jack! --- Wilt thou, or wilt thou not, take this for a letter? There's Quantity, I am sure. --- How have I fill'd a sheet (not a short-hand one indeed) without a subject! My fellow shall take this; for he is going to town. And if thou canst think tolerably of such execrable stuff, I will soon send thee another.

## LETTER XXIX.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Six Sat. morning, July 8.

HAVE I nothing new, nothing diverting, in my whimsical way, thou askest, in one of thy three letters before me, to entertain thee with? — And thou tellst me, that, when I have least to narrate, to speak in the Scotch phrase, I am most diverting. A pretty compliment, either to thyself, or to me. To both indeed! — A sign that thou hast as frothy a heart as I a head. But canst thou suppose, that this admirable woman is not All, is not Every-thing, with me? Yet I dread to think of her too; for detection of all my contrivances, I doubt, must come next.

The old Peer is also full of Miss Harlowe; and so are my cousins. He hopes I will not be such a dog [There's a specimen of his peer-like dialect], as to think of doing dishonourably by a woman of so much merit, beauty, and fortune; and, he says, of so good a family. But I tell him, that this is a string he must not touch: That it is a very tender point: In short, is my sore place; and that I am afraid he would handle it too roughly, were I to put myself into the power of so ungentle an operator.

He shakes his crazy head. He thinks all is not as it should be between us; longs to have me present her to him, as my wife; and often tells me what great things he will do, additional to his former proposals; and what presents he will make on the birth of the first child.

Bu<sup>s</sup>

But I hope the whole will be in my hands before such an event take place. No harm in hoping, Jack ! My uncle says, *Were it not for hope, the heart would break.*



EIGHT o'clock at Mid-summer, and these lazy varletesses (in full health) not come down yet to breakfast!—What a confounded indecency in young ladies, to let a Rake know that they love their beds so dearly, and, at the same time, *where to have them!* But I'll punish them: They shall breakfast with their old uncle, and yawn at one another, as if for a wager: While I drive my Phaeton to Col. Ambrose's, who yesterday gave me invitation both to breakfast and dine, on account of two Yorkshire nieces, celebrated toasts, who have been with him this fortnight past; and who, he says, want to see me. So, Jack, all women do not run away from me, thank Heaven!—I wish I could have leave of my heart, since the dear fugitive is so ingrateful, to drive her out of it with another Beauty. But who can supplant her? Who can be admitted to a place in it, after Miss Clarissa Harlowe?

At my return, if I can find a subject, I will scribble on, to oblige thee.

My Phaeton's ready: My cousins send me word they are just coming down: So in spite I'll be gone.—

*Saturday afternoon.*

I DID stay to dine with the Colonel, and his Lady and Nieces: But I could not pass the afternoon with them, for the heart of me. There was enough in the persons and faces of the two young ladies to set me upon comparisons. Particular features held my attention for a few moments: But those served but to whet my impatience to find the charmer of my soul; who, for person, for air, for mind, had never any equal. My heart recoil'd and ficken'd upon comparing minds and conversation. Pert wit, a too studied-for desire to please; each in high good humour with herself; an open-mouth affectation in both, to shew white teeth, as if the principal excellence; and to invite amorous familiarity, by the promise of a sweet breath; at the same time reflecting tacitly upon breaths arrogantly implied to be less pure.

Once

Vo

Once I could have borne them.

They seemed to be disappointed, that I was so soon able to leave them. Yet have I not at present so much vanity (My Clarissa has cured me of my vanity!), as to attribute their disappointment so much to particular liking of me, as to their own self-admiration. They looked upon me, as a connoisseur in beauty. They would have been proud of engaging my attention, as such: But so affected, so flimsy-witted, mere skin-deep beauties! — They had looked no further into themselves than what their glasses had enabled them to see: And their glasses were flattering-glasses too; for I thought them passive-faced, and spiritless; with eyes, however, upon the hunt for conquests, and bespeaking the attention of others, in order to countenance their own.—I believe I could, with a little pains, have given them life and soul, and to every feature of their faces sparkling information --- But my Clarissa! --- O Belford, my Clarissa has made me eyeless and senseless to every other Beauty! --- Do thou find her for me, as a subject worthy of my pen, or This shall be the last from

*Thy LOVELACE.*

### LETTER XXX.

*Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq.*

*Sunday night, July 9.*

NOW, Jack, have I a subject with a vengeance. I am in the very height of my tryal for all my sins to my beloved fugitive. For here, yesterday, at about five clock, arrived Lady Sarah Sadleir and Lady Betty Lawrence, each in her chariot and six. Dowagers love equipage; and these cannot travel ten miles without a set, and half a dozen horsemen.

My time had hung heavy upon my hands; and so I went to church after dinner. Why may not handsome fellows, thought I, like to be look'd at, as well as handsome wenches? --- I fell in, when Service was over, with Major Warne ton; and so came not home till after six; and was surprised, at entering the court-yard here, to find litter'd with equipages and servants. I was sure the owners of them came for no good to me.

Lady Sarah, I soon found, was raised to this visit by Lady Betty ; who has health enough to allow her to look out of herself, and out of her own affairs, for business. Yet congratulation to my uncle on his amendment (Spiteful devils on both accounts !) was the avowed errand. But coming in my absence, I was their principal subject; and they had opportunity to set each other's heart against me.

Simon Parsons hinted this to me, as I passed by the Steward's office ; for it seems they talked loud ; and he was making up some accounts with old Pritchard.

However, I hasten'd to pay my duty to them. Other people not performing theirs, is no excuse for the neglect of our own, you know.

*And now I enter upon my TRYAL.*

WITH horrible grave faces was I received. The two antiquies only bowed their tabby heads ; making longer faces than ordinary ; and all the old lines appearing strong in their furrow'd foreheads and fallen cheeks. How do you, cousin ? and, How do you, Mr. Lovelace ? looking all round at one another, as who should say, Do you speak first ; and, Do you : For they seemed resolved to lose no time.

I had nothing for it, but an air as manly, as theirs was womanly. Your servant, Madam, to Lady Betty ; and, Your servant, Madam—I am glad to see you abroad, to Lady Sarah.

I took my seat. Lord M. look'd horribly glum ; his fingers clasped, and turning round and round, under and over, his but just disgusted thumbs ; his fallow face, and goggling eyes, cast upon the floor, on the fire-place, on his two sisters, on his two kinswomen, by turns ; but not once deigning to look upon me.

Then I began to think of the Laudanum and wet cloth I had told thee of long ago ; and to call myself in question for a tenderness of heart that will never do me good.

At last, Mr. Lovelace ;—Cousin Lovelace !—Hem ! Hem !—I am sorry, very sorry, hesitated Lady Sarah that there is no hope of your ever taking up—

What's the matter now, Madam ?

The matter now! — Why, Lady Betty has two letters from Miss Harlowe, which have told us what's the matter — Are all women alike with you?

Yes; I could have answered; 'bating the difference which pride makes.'

Then they all chorus'd upon me — Such a character as Miss Harlowe's! cry'd one — A lady of so much generosity and good sense! another — How charmingly she writes! the two maiden monkies, looking at her fine hand-writing: Her perfections my crimes. What can you expect will be the end of these things? cried Lady Sarah — Damn'd, damn'd doings! vociferated the Peer, shaking his loose-flesh'd wabbling chaps, which hung on his shoulders like an old cow's dew-lap.

For my part, I hardly knew whether to sing or say, what I had to reply to these all-at-once attacks upon me! — Fair and softly, Ladies — One at a time, I beseech you. I am not to be hunted down without being heard, I hope. Pray let me see these letters. I beg you will let me see them.

There they are: — That's the first — Read it out, if you can.

I open'd a letter from my charmer, dated *Thursday, June 29.* our wedding-day, that was to be, and written to Lady Betty Lawrence. — By the contents, to my great joy, I find the dear creature is alive and well, and in charming spirits. But the direction where to send an answer was so scratched out, that I could not read it; which afflicted me much.

She puts three questions in it to Lady Betty.

1st, About a letter of hers, dated *June 7.* congratulating our nuptials, and which I was so good as to save my aunt the trouble of writing: A very civil thing of me, I think.

Again — “Whether she and one of her nieces Montague were to go to town, on an old Chancery-suit?” And, “Whether they actually did go to town accordingly, and to Hamstead afterwards?” and “Whether they brought to town from thence the young creature whom they visited;” was the subject of the second and third questions.

A little inquisitive dear rogue ! And what did she expect to be the better for these questions ?—But curiosity, damn'd curiosity, is the itch of the Sex—Yet when didst thou know it turn'd to their benefit ?—For they seldom inquire, but when they fear—And the proverb, as my Lord has it, says *It comes with a fear.* That is, I suppose, what they fear, generally happens, because there is generally occasion for the fear.

Curiosity indeed she avows to be her only motive for these interrogatories : For tho' she says, her Ladyship may suppose the questions are not asked for good to *me*, yet the answer can do me no harm, nor her good, only to give her to understand, whether I have told her—a parcel of damn'd lies ; that's the plain English of her inquiry.

Well, Madam, said I, with as much philosophy as I could assume ; and may I ask, pray, What was your Ladyship's answer ?

There's a copy of it, tossing it to me, very disrespectfully.

This answer was dated *July 1.* A very kind and complaisant one to the lady, but very so-so to her poor kinsman.—That people can give up their own flesh and blood with so much ease !—She tells her “ how proud all “ our family would be of an alliance with such an ex-“ cellence.” She does me justice in saying how much I adore her, as an angel of a lady ; and begs of her for I know not how many fakes, besides my soul's fake “ that “ she will be so good as to have me for an husband.” And answers,—thou wilt guesst how—to the lady's questions.

Well, Madam ; and, pray, may I be favour'd with the lady's other letter ? I presume it is in reply to yours.

It is, said the Peer : But, Sir, let me ask you a few questions, before you read it—Give *me* the letter, Lady Betty.

There it is, my Lord.

Then on went the spectacles, and his head moved to the lines—A charming pretty hand !—I have often heard, that this lady is a *genus.*

And so, Jack, repeating my Lord's wise comments and questions will let thee into the contents of this merciless letter.

“ Monday,

1891.11.11. 101  
*Miss Clarissa Harlowe.*

"Monday, July 3." [reads my Lord]---Let me see!---That was last Monday; no longer ago! "Monday July the third.--Madam---I cannot excuse myself---um, um, um, um, um, um [humming inarticulately, and skipping]---"I must own to you, Madam, that the honour of being related"---

Off went the spectacles---Now, tell me, Sir, Has not this Lady lost all the friends she had in the world, for your sake?

She has very implacable friends, my Lord: We all know That.

But has she not lost all for your sake?---Tell me That. I believe so, my Lord.

Well then!---I am glad thou art not so graceless, as to deny That.

On went the spectacles again---"I must own to you, "Madam, that the honour of being related to ladies as "eminent for their virtue, as for their descent"---*Very pretty, truly!* said my Lord, repeating, "*as eminent for their virtue as for their descent,* was, at first, no small inducement with me to lend an ear to Mr. Lovelace's address."

—There is dignity, born dignity, in this Lady, cry'd my Lord.

*Lady Sarah.* She would have been a grace to our family.

*Lady Betty.* Indeed she would.

*Lovel.* To a royal family, I will venture to say.

*Ld. M.* Then what a devil---

*Lovel.* Please to read on, my Lord. It cannot be *her* letter, if it does not make you admire her more and more as you read. Cousin Charlotte, Cousin Patty, pray attend—Read on, my Lord.

*Miss Charlotte.* Amazing fortitude!

*Miss Patty* only lifted up her dove's eyes.

*Lord M.* [reading] "And the rather, as I was determined, had it come to effect, to do every thing in my power to deserve your favourable opinion."

Then again they chorus'd upon me!

A blessed time of it, poor I!---I had nothing for it but prudence!

*Lovel.* Pray read on, my Lord---I told you, how you would all admire her---Or shall I read?

*Lord M.* Damn'd assurance! [reading] "I had another motive, which I knew would of itself give me merit with your whole family;---*They were all ear-*" A presumptuous one; a punishable presumptuous one, as it has proved; in the hope that I might be an humble means in the hand of Providence, to reclaim a man, who had, as I thought, good sense enough at bottom to be reclaimed; or at least gratitude enough to acknowledge the intended obligation, whether the generous hope were to succeed or not."--Excellent young creature!

Excellent young creature! echoed the ladies, with their handkerchiefs at their eyes, attended with nose-music.

*Lovel.* By my soul, Miss Patty, you weep in the wrong place: You shall never go with me to a tragedy.

*Lady Betty.* Harden'd wretch!----

His Lordship had pulled off his spectacles to wipe them. His eyes were misty; and he thought the fault in his spectacles.

I saw they were all cock'd and prim'd---To be sure that is a very pretty sentence, said I ---That is the excellency of this lady, that in every line, as she writes on, she improves upon herself. Pray, my Lord, proceed---I know her style; the next sentence will still rise upon us.

*Lord M.* Damn'd fellow! [again saddling and reading] "But I have been most egregiously mistaken in Mr. Lovelace!"---[Then they all clamour'd again.] "The only man, I persuade myself---"

*Lovel.* Ladies may persuade themselves to any thing. But how can she answer for what other men would or would not have done in the same circumstances?

I was forced to say any-thing to stifle their outcries. Pox take ye all together, thought I; as if I had not vexation enough in losing her!

*Lord M.* [reading] "The only man, I persuade myself, pretending to be a gentleman, in whom I could have been so much mistaken."

They were all beginning again---Pray, my Lord, proceed!—Hear, hear—Pray, Ladies, hear!—Now, my Lord be pleased to proceed. The Ladies are silent.

So they were; lost in admiration of me, hands and eyes uplifted.

*Lord M.* I will, to thy confusion; for he had look'd over the next sentence.

What wretches, Belford, what spiteful wretches, are poor mortals!—So rejoiced to sting one another! to see each other stung!

*Lord M.* [reading] “For while I was endeavouring “to save a drowning wretch, I have been, not accidentally, but premeditatedly, and of set purpose, drawn “in after him.”—What say you to this, Sirr?

*Lady S.* { Ay, Sir, what say you to this?

*Lady B.* }

*Lovel.* Say! Why I say it is a very pretty metaphor, if it would but hold.—But if you please, my Lord, read on. Let me hear what is further said, and I will speak to it all together.

*Lord M.* I will.—“And he has had the glory to add “to the list of those he has ruin'd, a name that, I will be bold to say, would not have disparaged his own.”

They all looked at me, as expecting me to speak.

*Lovel.* Be pleased to proceed, my Lord: I will speak to this by-and-by. How came she to know, I kept a list? —I will speak to this by-and-by.

*Lord M.* [reading on] “And this, Madam, by means, “that would shock humanity to be made acquainted with.”

Then again, in a hurry, off went the spectacles.

This was a plaguy stroke upon me. I thought myself an oak in impudence; but, by my troth, this had almost felled me.

*Lord M.* What say you to this, SIR-R!—

Remember, Jack, to read all their *Sirs* in this dialogue with a double *rr*, *Sirr*!—denoting indignation rather than respect.

They all looked at me, as if to see if I could blush.

*Lovel.* Eyes off, my Lord!—Eyes off, Ladies! [looking bashfully, I believe]—What say I to this, my Lord!—Why, I say, that this lady has a strong manner of expressing herself! —That's all —There are many things that pass among Lovers, which a man cannot explain himself upon before grave people.

*Lady Betty.* Among Lovers, Sir-r !---But, Mr. Lovelace, can you say, that this lady behaved either like a weak, or a credulous person?---Can you say---

*Lovel.* I am ready to do the lady all manner of justice. ---But, pray now, Ladies, if I am to be thus interrogated, let me know the contents of the rest of the letter, that I may be prepared for my defence, as you are all for my arraignment. For, to be required to answer piecemeal thus, without knowing what is to follow, is a cursed insnaring way of proceeding.

They gave me the letter : I read it thro' to myself :— And by the repetition of what I said, thou wilt gues at the remaining contents.

You shall find, Ladies ; you shall find, my Lord, that I will not spare myself. Then holding the letter in my hand, and looking upon it, as a lawyer upon his breviate,

Miss Harlowe says, " That when your Ladyship " [turning to *Lady Betty*] " shall know, that in the progress to her " ruin, wilful falsehoods, repeated forgeries, and number- " less perjuries, were not the least of my crimes, you will " judge that she can have no principles that will make her " worthy of an alliance with ladies of yours, and your " noble sisters character, if she could not, from her soul, " declare, that such an alliance can never now take place."

Surely, Ladies, this is passion ! This is not reason. If our family would not think themselves dishonoured by my marrying a person whom I had so treated ; but, on the contrary, would rejoice that I did her this justice ; and if she has come out pure gold from the assay ; and has nothing to reproach herself with ; why should it be an impeachment of her principles, to consent, that such an alliance should take place ?

She cannot think herself the worse, *justly* she cannot, for what was done against her will.

Their countenances menaced a general uproar---But I proceeded.

Your Lordship read to us, That she had an *hope*, a *presumptuous one* ; nay, a *punishably presumptuous one*, she calls it ; " that she might be a means in the hands of " Providence, to reclaim me ; and that this, she knew, " if effected, would give her a merit with you all." But

from

from what would she reclaim me? — She had heard, you'll say (but she had only heard, at the time she held *That Hope*), that, to express myself in the women's dialect, I was a very wicked fellow: — Well, and what then? — Why, truly, the very moment she was convinced, by her own experience, that the charge against me was more than hearsay; and that, of consequence, I was a fit subject for her generous endeavours to work upon; she would needs give me up. Accordingly, she flies out, and declares, that the ceremony which would repair all, shall never take place! — Can this be from any other motive, than female resentment?

This brought them all upon me, as I intended it should: It was as a tub to the whale; and after I had let them play with it awhile, I claimed their attention, and knowing that they always loved to hear me prate, went on.

The lady, it is plain, thought, that the reclaiming of a man from bad habits, was a much easier task, than, in the nature of things, it can be.

She writes, as your Lordship has read, "That in endeavouring to save a drowning wretch, she had been, not accidentally, but premeditatedly, and of set purpose, drawn in after him." But how is this, Ladies? — You see by her own words, that I am still far from being out of danger myself. Had she found me, in a quagmire suppose, and I had got out of it by her means, and left her to perish in it; that would have been a crime indeed. — But is not the fact quite otherwise? Has she not, if her allegory proves what she would have it prove, got out herself, and left me floundering still deeper and deeper in? — What she should have done, had she been in earnest to save me, was, to join her hand with mine, that so we might by our united strength help one another out. — I held out my hand to her, and besought her to give me hers: — But, no, truly! she was determin'd to get out herself as fast as she could, let me sink or swim: Refusing her assistance (against her own principles), because she saw I wanted it. — You see, Ladies, you see, my Lord, how pretty tinkling words run away with ears inclined to be musical! —

They were all ready to exclaim again: But I went on, proleptically, as a rhetorician would say, before their voices could break out into words.

But my fair accuser says, That, " I have added to the list of those I have ruin'd, a name, that would not have disparaged my own." It is true, I have been gay and enterprising. It is in my constitution to be so. I know not how I came by such a constitution : But I was never accustomed to check or controul ; that you all know. When a man finds himself hurry'd by passion into a slight offence, which, however slight, will not be forgiven, he may be made desperate : As a thief, who only intends a robbery, is often by resistance, and for self-preservation, drawn in to commit a murder.

I was a strange, a horrid wretch, with every one. But he must be a silly fellow who has not something to say for himself, when every cause has its black and its white side.—Westminster-hall, Jack, affords every day as confident defences as mine.

But what right, proceeded I, has this lady to complain of me, when she as good as says—Here, Lovelace, you have acted the part of a villain by me—You would repair your fault : But I won't let you, that I may have the satisfaction of exposing you ; and the pride of refusing you ?

But, was that the case ? Was that the case ? Would I pretend to say, I would now marry the lady, if she would have me ?

*Lovel.* You find she renounces Lady Betty's mediation—

*Lord M.* [interrupting me] *Words are wind ; but deeds are mind :* What signifies your cursed quibbling, Bob ? —Say plainly, If she will have you, will you have her ? Answer me, Yes or No ; and lead us not a wild-goose-chase, after your meaning.

*Lovel.* She knows I would. But here, my Lord, if she thus goes on to expose herself and me, she will make it a dishonour to us both to marry.

*Charl.* But how must she have been treated—

*Lovel.* [interrupting her] Why now, cousin Charlotte, chucking her under the chin, would you have me tell you all that has pass'd between the lady and me ? Would you care, had you a bold and enterprising lover, that proclamation should be made of every little piece of amorous roguery, that he offer'd to you ?

Charlotte

Charlotte redd'n'd. They all began to exclaim. But I proceeded.

The lady says, "She has been dishonour'd" (devil take me, if I spare myself!) "by means, that would shock humanity to be made acquainted with them." She is a very innocent lady, and may not be a judge of the means she hints at. *Over-niceness may be under-niceness*: Have you not such a proverb, my Lord? ---tantamount to, *One extreme produces another!* ---Such a lady as This, may possibly think her case more extraordinary than it is. This I will take upon me to say, That if she has met with the only man in the world, who would have treated her, as she says I have treated her, I have met in her, with the only woman in the world, who would have made such a rout about a case that is uncommon only from the circumstances that attend it.

This brought them all upon me, hands, eyes, voices, all lifted up at once. But my Lord M. who has in his head (the last seat of retreating lewdness) as much wickedness as I have in my heart, was forced (upon the air I spoke this with, and Charlotte's and all the rest reddening) to make a mouth that was big enough to swallow up the other half of his face; crying out, to avoid laughing, Oh! Oh! ---as if under the power of a gouty twinge.

Hadst thou seen how the two tabbies, and the young grimalkins, looked at one another, at my Lord, and at me, by turns, thou too wouldest have been ready to split thy ugly face just in the middle. Thy mouth has already done half the work. And, after all, I found not seldom in this conversation, that my humorous undaunted way forced a smile into my service from the prim mouths of the younger ladies especially: For the case not being likely to be theirs, they could not be so much affected by it, as the elders; who, having had Roses of their own, would have been very loth to have had them nipt in the bud, without saying, By your leave, Mrs. Rose bush, to the mother of it.

The next article of my indictment was for forgery; and for personating of Lady Betty and my cousin Charlotte. Two shocking charges! thou'l't say: And so they were! ---The Peer was outrageous upon the forgery-charge.

The Ladies vow'd never to forgive the *personating* part,  
Not a peace-maker among them. So we all turn'd wo-  
men, and scolded.

My Lord told me, That he believed in his conscience  
there was not a viler fellow upon *God's earth*, than me.---  
What signifies mincing the matter, said he ?---And that it  
was not the first time I had forged his hand.

To this I answer'd, that I supposed, When the statute  
of *scandalum magnatum* was framed, there were a good  
many in the peerage, who knew they deserved hard names;  
and that that Law therefore was rather made to privilege  
their qualities, than to whiten their characters.

He called upon me to explain myself, with a *Sir-r*, so  
pronounced, as to shew, that one of the most ignominious  
words in our language was in his head.

People, I said, that were fenced in by their quality,  
and by their years, should not take freedoms, that a man  
of spirit could not put up with, unless he were able  
heartily to despise the insulter.

This set him in a violent passion. He would send for  
Pritchard instantly. Let Pritchard be called. He would  
alter his will; and all he *could* leave from me, he *would*.

Do, do, my Lord, said I: I always valued my own  
pleasure above your estate. But I'll let Pritchard know,  
that if he draws, he shall sign and seal.

Why, what would I do to Pritchard? ---Shaking his  
crazy head at me.

Only, what he, or any man else, writes with his pen,  
to despoil me of what I think my right, he shall seal  
with his ears; that's all, my Lord.

Then the two Ladies interposed.

Lady Sarah told me, That I carried things a great way;  
and that neither Lord M. nor any of them, deserved the  
treatment I gave them.

I said, I could not bear to be used ill by my Lord, for  
two reasons; first, Because I respected his Lordship above  
any man living; and next, Because it look'd as if I were  
induced by selfish considerations, to take that from Him,  
which nobody else would offer to me.

And what, return'd he, shall be my inducement to take  
what I do at your hands? ---Hay, Sir?

Indeed,

Indeed, cousin Lovelace, said Lady Betty, with great gravity, we do not any of us, as Lady Sarah says, deserve at your hands the treatment you give us: And let me tell you, that I don't think my character, and your cousin Charlotte's, ought to be prostituted, in order to ruin an innocent lady. She must have known early the good opinion we all have of her, and how much we wished her to be your wife. This good opinion of ours has been an inducement to her (you see she says so) to listen to your address. And this, with her friends folly, has helped to throw her into your power. How you have requited her, is too apparent. It becomes the character we all bear, to disclaim your actions by her. And, let me tell you, that to have her abused by wicked people raised up to personate us, or any of us, makes a double call upon us to disclaim them.

*Lovel.* Why this is talking somewhat like. I would have you all disclaim my actions. I own I have done very vilely by this lady. One step led to another. I am curst with an enterprising spirit. I hate to be foiled.

*Foiled!* interrupted Lady Sarah. What a shame to talk at this rate! --- Did the lady set up a contention with you? All nobly sincere, and plain-hearted, have I heard Miss Clarissa Harlowe is: Above art, above disguise; neither the Coquet, nor the Prude! --- Poor lady! She deserved a better fate from the man for whom she took the step which she so freely blames!

This above half affected me --- Had this dispute been so handled by every one, I had been ashamed to look up. I began to be bashful. ---

Charlotte ask'd, If I did not still seem inclinable to do the lady justice, if she would have *me*? It would be, she dared to say, the greatest felicity the family could know (She would answer for one), that this fine lady were of it.

They all declared to the same effect; and Lady Sarah put the matter home to me.

But my Lord *Marplot* would have it, that I could not be serious for six minutes together.

I told his Lordship, that he was mistaken; light as he thought I made of this subject, I never knew any that went so near my heart.

Miss

Miss Patty said, She was glad to hear *that*: Indeed she was glad to hear *that*: And her soft eyes glistered with pleasure.

Lord M. called her Sweet soul, and was ready to cry.

Not from humanity neither, Jack. This Peer has no bowels; as thou may'st observe by his treatment of *me*. But when peoples minds are weaken'd by a sense of their own infirmities, and when they are drawing on to their latter ends, they will be moved on the slightest occasions, whether those offer from *within*, or *without* them. And this, frequently, the unpenetrating world calls *humanity*, when all the time, in compassionating the miseries of human nature, they are but pitying themselves; and were they in strong health and spirits, would care as little for any-body else as thou or I do.

Here broke they off my tryal for this Sitting. Lady Sarah was much fatigued. It was agreed to pursue the subject in the morning. They all, however, retired together, and went into private conference.

## LETTER XXXI.

*Mr. LOVELACE. In Continuation.*

THE Ladies, instead of taking up the subject where we had laid it down, must needs touch upon passages in my fair accuser's letter, which I was in hopes they would have let rest, as we were in a tolerable way. But, truly, they must hear all they could hear, of our story, and what I had to say to those passages, that they might be better enabled to mediate between us, if I were really and indeed inclined to do her the hoped-for justice.

These passages were, 1st, "That after I had trick'd "her, against her will, into the act of going off with me, "I carried her to one of the worst houses in London."

2. "That I had made a wicked attempt upon her; in "resentment of which, she fled to Hamstead, privately, "3dly, Came the forgery, and personating charge again; and we were upon the point of renewing our quarrel, before we could get to the next charge: Which was still worse.

For that, 4thly, was, " That having trick'd her back  
" to the vile house, I had first robbed her of her sences,  
" and then of her honour ; detaining her afterwards a  
" prisoner there."

Were I to tell thee the glosses I put upon these heavy charges, what would it be, but to repeat many of the extenuating arguments I have used in my letters to thee ? -- Suffice it, therefore, to say, that I insisted much, by way of palliation, on the lady's extreme nice ness : On her diffidence in my honour : On Miss Howe's contriving spirit ; plots on their parts, begetting plots on mine : On the high passions of the sex : I asserted, that my whole view, in gently restraining her, was to oblige her to forgive me, and to marry me ; and this, for the honour of both families. I boasted of my own good qualities ; some of which none that know me, deny ; and which few libertines can lay claim to.

They then fell into warm admirations and praises of the lady ; all of them preparatory, as I knew, to the grand question : And thus it was introduced by Lady Sarah.

We have said as much as I think we can say, upon these letters of the poor lady. To dwell upon the mischiefs that may ensue from the abuse of a person of her rank, if all the reparation be not made, that now can be made, would perhaps be to little purpose. But you seem, Sir, still to have a just opinion of her, as well as affection for her. Her virtue is not in the least questionable. She could not resent as she does, had she any thing to reproach herself with. She is, by every-body's account, a fine woman ; has a good estate in her own right ; is of no contemptible family ; tho' I think with regard to her, they have acted as imprudently as unworthily. For the excellency of her mind, for good oeconomy, the common speech of her, as the worthy Dr. Lewin once told me, is, *That her prudence would enrich a poor man, and her piety reclaim a licentious one.* I, who have not been abroad twice this twelvemonth, came hither purposely, so did Lady Betty, to see if justice may not be done her ; and also whether we, and my Lord M. (your nearest relations, Sir) have, or have not, any influence over you. And, for my own part, as your determination shall be in this article, such shall be

mine,

mine, with regard to the disposition of all that is within my power.

*Lady Betty.* And mine.

And mine, said my Lord: And valiantly he swore to it.

*Lovel.* Far be it from me to think lightly of favours you may any of you be glad I would deserve. But as far be it from me to enter into conditions against my own liking, with sordid views!—As to future mischiefs, let them come. I have not done with the Harlowes yet. They were the aggressors; and I should be glad they would let me hear from them, in the way they should hear from me, in the like case. Perhaps, I should not be sorry to be found, rather than be obliged to seek, on this occasion.

*Miss Charlotte* [reddening]. Spoke like a man of violence, rather than a man of reason! I hope you'll allow that, cousin.

*Lady Sarah.* Well, but since what is done, is done, and cannot be undone, let us think of the next best. Have you any objection against marrying Miss Harlowe, if she will have you?

*Lovel.* There can possibly be but one: That she is everywhere, no doubt, as well as to Lady Betty, pursuing that maxim, peculiar to herself (*and let me tell you, so it ought to be*), That what she cannot conceal from herself, she will publish to all the world.

*Miss Patty.* The lady, to be sure, writes this in the bitterness of her grief, and in despair.

And this from *you*, cousin Patty!—*Sweet girl!* And would *you*, my dear, in the like case (whispering her), have meant no more by the like exclamations?

I had a rap with her fan, and a blush; and from Lord M. a reflection, That I turn'd into jest every thing they said.

I asked, If they thought the Harlowes deserved any consideration from me; and whether that family would not exult over me, were I to marry their daughter, as if I dared not to do otherwise?

*Lady Sarah.* Once I was angry with that family, as we all were. But now I pity them; and think, that you have but too well justified the worst treatment they gave you.

*Lord M.* Their family is of standing. All gentlemen of it, and rich, and reputable. Let me tell you, that

many

many of our coronets would be glad they could derive their descents from no worse a stem than theirs.

*Lovel.* They are a narrow-soul'd and implacable family. I hate them : And tho' I revere the lady, scorn all relation to them.

*Lady Betty.* I wish no worse could be said of *him*, who is such a scorner of common failings in *others*.

*Lord M.* How would my sister Lovelace have reproached herself for all her indulgent folly to this favourite boy of hers, had she lived till now, and been present on this occasion !

*Lady Sarah.* Well but, begging your Lordship's pardon, let us see if any thing can be done for this poor lady.

*Miss Ch.* If Mr. Lovelace has nothing to object against the lady's character (and I presume to think he is not *asham'd* to do her justice, tho' it may make against himself), I cannot see, but honour, and generosity, will compel from him all that we expect. If there be any levities, any weaknesses, to be charg'd upon the lady, I should not open my lips in her favour ; tho' in private I would pity her, and deplore her hard hap. And yet, even then, there might not want arguments, from honour and gratitude, in so particular a case, to engage you, Sir, to make good the vows it is plain you have broken.

*Lady Betty.* My niece Charlotte has called upon you so justly, and has put the question to you so properly, that I cannot but wish you would speak to it directly, and without evasion.

All in a breath then bespoke my seriousness, and my justice : And in this manner I deliver'd myself, assuming an air sincerely solemn.

" I am very sensible, that the performance of the task you have put me upon, will leave me without excuse : But I will not have recourse either to evasion, or palliation.

" As my cousin Charlotte has severely observ'd, I am not *asham'd* to do justice to Miss Harlowe's merit in words, altho' I will confess, that I ought to blush that I have done it so little in deeds.

" I own to *you* all, and, what is more, with high regret (if not with *shame*, cousin Charlotte), that I have a

" great

" great deal to answer for in my usage of this lady.  
" The Sex has not a nobler mind, nor a lovelier person of  
" it. And, for *virtue*, I could not have believed (excuse  
" me, Ladies) that there ever was a woman who *gave*, or  
" *could* have given, such illustrious, such uniform proofs of  
" it: For, in her whole conduct, she has shewn herself  
" to be equally above temptation and art; and, I had  
" almost said, human frailty.

" The step she so freely blames herself for taking, was  
" truly what she calls *compulsatory*: For tho' she was pro-  
" voked to *think* of going off with me, she intended it  
" not, nor was provided to do so: Neither would she  
" ever have had the *thought* of it, had her relations left  
" her free, upon her offer'd composition, to renounce the  
" man she did *not* hate, in order to avoid the man she *did*.

" It piqu'd my pride, I own, that I could so little de-  
" pend upon the force of those impressions, which I had  
" the vanity to hope I had made in a heart so delicate;  
" and in my worst devices against her, I encouraged my-  
" self, that I abused no confidence; for none had she in  
" my honour.

" The evils she has suffer'd, it would have been more  
" than a miracle had she avoided. Her watchfulness  
" render'd more plots abortive, than those which con-  
" tributed to her fall; and they were many and various.  
" And all her greater trials and hardships were owing  
" to her noble resistance and just resentment.

" I know, proceeded I, how much I condemn myself  
" in the justice I am doing to this excellent creature.  
" But yet I *will* do her justice, and cannot help it if I  
" would. And I hope this shews, that I am not so to-  
" tally abandon'd, as I have been thought to be.

" Indeed with me, she has done more honour to the  
" Sex in her fall, if it be to be called a fall ( In truth it  
" ought not), than ever any other could do in her stand-  
" ing.

" When, at length, I had given her watchful virtue  
" cause of suspicion, I was then indeed obliged to make  
" use of power and art to hinder her from escaping from  
" me. She then formed contrivances to elude mine; but

" all hers were such as strict truth and punctilious honour would justify. She could not stoop to deceit and falsehood, no, not to save herself. More than once, justly did she tell me, fired by conscious worthiness, " that her soul was my soul's superior !---Forgive me, " Ladies, for saying, that till I knew *her*, I question'd a " Soul in a Sex, created, as I was willing to suppose, only " for temporary purposes.---It is not to be imagin'd into " what absurdities men of free principles run, in order to " justify to themselves their free practices ; and to make " a religion to their minds : And yet, in this respect, I " have not been so faulty as some others.

" No wonder that such a noble creature as this looked " upon every studied artifice, as a degree of baseness, not " to be forgiven : No wonder that she could so easily " become averse to the man (tho' once she beheld " him with an eye not wholly indifferent) whom she " thought capable of premeditated guilt.---Nor, give me " leave, on the other hand, to say, is it to be wonder'd at, " that the man who found it so difficult to be forgiven, " for the *slighter* offences, and who had not the grace to " recede or repent (made desperate), should be hurried " on to the commission of the *greater*.

" In short, Ladies, in a word, my Lord, Miss Clarissa " Harlowe is an angel ; if ever there was or could " be one in human nature : And is, and ever was, as " pure as an angel in her will : And this justice I must do " her, altho' the question, I see by every glistening eye, " is ready to be asked, What, then, Lovelace, are you ?--"

*Lord M.* A devil !---A damn'd devil ! I must answer. And may the curse of God follow you in all you undertake, if you do not make *her* the best amends now in your power to make her !

*Lovel.* From you, my Lord, I could expect no other : But from the Ladies I hope for less violence from the ingenuity of my confession.

The Ladies, elder and younger, had their handkerchiefs to their eyes, at the just testimony which I bore to the merits of this exalted creature ; and which I would make no scruple to bear at the Bar of a Court of Justice, were I to be called to it.

*Lady Betty.* Well, Sir, this is a noble character. If you think as you speak, surely you cannot refuse to do the lady all the justice now in your power to do her.

They all joined in this demand.

I pleaded, that I was sure she would not have me: That, when she had taken a resolution, she was not to be moved: Unpersuadableness was an Harlowe sin: That, and her name, I told them, were all she had of theirs.

All were of opinion, that she might, in her present desolate circumstances, be brought to forgive me. Lady Sarah said, that her sister and she would endeavour to find out the *Noble Sufferer*, as they justly called her; and would take her into their protection, and be guarantees to her of the justice that I would do her; as well after marriage, as before.

It was some pleasure to me, to observe the placability of these ladies of my own family, had they, any or either of them, met with a *LOVELACE*. But 'twould be hard upon us honest fellows, Jack, if all women were *CLARISSA*'s.

Here I am obliged to break off.

## LETTER XXXII.

*Mr. LOVELACE. In Continuation.*

**I**T is much better, Jack, to tell your own story, when it *must* be known, than to have an adversary tell it for you. Conscious of this, I gave them a particular account, how urgent I had been with her to fix upon the Thursday after I left her (it being her uncle Harlowe's anniversary birth-day, and named to oblige her) for the private celebration; having some days before actually procured a Licence, which still remained with her.

That, not being able to prevail upon her to promise any thing, while under a supposed restraint; I offered to leave her at full liberty, if she would give me the least hope for that day. But neither did this offer avail me.

That this inflexibleness making me desperate, I resolved to add to my former fault, by giving directions, that she should not either go, or correspond, out of the house, till I returned from M. Hall; well knowing, that, if she were at full liberty, I must for ever lose her.

,

That

That this constraint had so much incensed her, that altho' I wrote no less than four different letters, I could not procure a single word in answer; tho' I pressed her but for four words to signify the day and the church.

I referred to my two cousins to vouch for me the extraordinary methods I took to send messengers to town, tho' they knew not the occasion: Which now I told them, was *this*.

I acquainted them, that I even had wrote to you, Jack, and to another gentleman, of whom I thought she had a good opinion, to attend her, in order to press for her compliance; holding myself in readiness the last day, at Salt-hill, to meet the messenger they should send, and proceed to London, if his message were favourable: But that, before they could attend her, she had found means to fly away once more: And is now, said I, perch'd perhaps, somewhere under Lady Betty's window at Glenham Hall; and there, like the sweet Philomela, a thorn in her breast, warbles forth her melancholy complaints against her barbarous Tereus.

Lady Betty declared, That she was not with *her*; nor did she know where she was. She should be, she added, the most welcome guest to her, that she ever received.

In truth, I had a suspicion, that she was already in their knowledge, and taken into their protection; for Lady Sarah I imagin'd incapable of being roused to this spirit by a letter only from Miss Harlowe, and that not directed to herself; she being a very indolent and melancholy woman. But her sister, I find, had wrought her up to it: For Lady Betty is as officious and managing a woman as Mrs. Howe; but of a much more generous and noble disposition---She is *my aunt*, Jack.

I supposed, I said, that her Ladyship might have a private direction where to send to her. I spoke, as I wish'd:

would have given the world, to have heard, that she was inclined to cultivate the interest of any of my family.

Lady Betty answer'd, that she had no direction but what was in the letter; which she had scratched out, and which, was probable, was only a temporary one, in order to void me: Otherwise she would hardly have directed an answer to be left at an inn. And she was of opinion, that

to apply to Miss Howe would be the only certain way to succeed in any application for forgiveness, would I enable that young lady to interest herself in procuring it.

*Miss Charlotte.* Permit me to make a proposal.---Since we are all of one mind in relation to the justice due to Miss Harlowe, if Mr. Lovelace will oblige himself to marry her, I will make Miss Howe a visit, little as I am acquainted with her; and endeavour to engage her interest to forward the desired reconciliation. And if this can be done, I make no question but all may be happily accommodated; for every-body knows the love there is between Miss Harlowe and Miss Howe.

MARRIAGE, with these women, thou seest, Jack, is an atonement for all we can do to them. A true dramatic recompence!

This motion was highly approved of; and I gave my honour, as desired, in the fullest manner they could wish.

*Lady Sarah.* Well then, cousin Charlotte, begin your treaty with Miss Howe, out of hand.

*Lady Betty.* Pray do. And let Miss Harlowe be told, that I am ready to receive her, as the welcomest of guests; And I will not have her out of my sight till the knot is tied.

*Lady Sarah.* Tell her from me, That she shall be my daughter!---Instead of my poor Betsey!---And shed a tear in remembrance of her lost daughter.

*Lord M.* What say you, Sir, to this?

*Lovel.* CONTENT, my Lord. I speak in the language of your house.

*Lord M.* We are not to be foaled, nephew. No quibbling. We will have no slur put upon us.

*Lovel.* You shall not. And yet, I did not intend to marry, if she exceeded the appointed Thursday. But, I think, according to her own notions, that I have injured her beyond reparation, altho' I were to make her the best of husbands; as I am resolved to be, if she will condescend, as I will call it, to have me. And be this cousin Charlotte, my part of your commission to say.

This pleased them all.

*Lord M.* Give thy hand, Bob!---Thou talkest like man of honour at last. I hope we may depend upon what thou sayest?

The Ladies eyes put the same question to me.  
Lovel. You may, my Lord. You may, Ladies. Absolutely you may.

Then was the personal character of the lady, as well as her more extraordinary talents and endowments, again expatiated upon : And Miss Patty, who had once seen her, launched out more than all the rest in her praise. These were followed by *Family-cogencies* ; what never are forgotten to be inquired after in marriage-treaties, the principal inducements to the *Sages* of a family, and the least to be mentioned by the *Parties* themselves, altho' even by them, perhaps, the first thought of : That is to say, inquisition into the lady's fortune ; into the particulars of the grandfather's estate ; and what her father, and her single-soul'd uncles, will probably do for her, if a reconciliation be effected ; as, by their means, they make no doubt but it will, between both families, if it be not my fault. The two Venerables [No longer Tabbies with me now] hinted at rich presents on their own parts ; and my Lord declared, that he would make such overtures in my behalf, as should render my marriage with Miss Harlowe the best day's work I ever made ; and what, he doubted not, but would be as agreeable to that family, as to myself.

Thus, at present, by a single hair, hangs over my head the matrimonial sword. And thus ended my tryal. And thus are we all friends ; and Cousin and Cousin, and Nephew and Nephew, at every word.

Did ever Comedy end more happily, than this long tryal ?

### LETTER XXXIII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Wedn. July 12.

SO, Jack, they think they have gain'd a mighty point. But, were I to change my mind, were I to repent, I fancy I am safe.—And yet this very moment it rises to my mind, that 'tis hard trusting too ; for surely there must be some embers, where there was fire so lately, that may be stirr'd up to give a blaze to combustibles strew'd lightly upon them. Love (like some self-propagating plants or

roots,

roots, which have taken strong hold in the earth), when once got deep into the heart, is hardly ever totally extirpated, except by Matrimony indeed, which is the Grave of Love, because it allows of the End of Love. Then these ladies, all advocates *for herself*, *with herself*, Miss Howe at their head, perhaps — Not in favour to me — I don't expect That from Miss Howe.—But perhaps in favour to *herself*: For Miss Howe has reason to apprehend vengeance from me, I ween. Her Hickman will be safe too, as she may think, if I marry her beloved friend: For he has been a busy fellow, and I have long wish'd to have a slap at him! — The lady's case desperate with her friends too; and likely to be so, while single, and her character exposed to censure.

A husband is a charming cloak; a fig-leaf'd apron for a wife: And for a lady to be protected in liberties, in diversions, which her heart pants after—and all her faults, even the most criminal, were she to be detected, to be thrown upon the husband, and the ridicule too; a charming eligible for a wife!

But I shall have one comfort, if I marry, which pleases me not a little. If a man's wife has a dear friend of her sex, a hundred liberties may be taken with that friend, which could not be taken, if the *single lady* (knowing what a title to freedoms marriage has given him with her friend) was not less scrupulous with him than she ought to be, as to *herself*. Then there are broad freedoms (shall I call them?) that may be taken by the husband with his wife, that may not be quite shocking, which if the wife *bears before her friend*, will serve for a lesson to *that friend*; and if that friend *bears* to be present at them without check or bashfulness, will shew a sagacious fellow, that she can bear as much herself, at *proper time and place*. *Chastity*, Jack, like *Piety*, is an uniform thing. If in *look*, if in *speech*, a girl gives way to undue levity, depend upon it, the devil has got one of his cloven feet in her heart already— So, Hickman, take care of thyself, I advise thee, whether I marry or not.

Thus, Jack, have I at once reconciled myself to all my relations—And, if the lady refuses me, throw the fault upon her. This, I knew, would be in my power

to do at any time : And I was the more arrogant to them, in order to heighten the merit of my compliance.

But after all, It would be very whimsical, would it not, if all my plots and contrivances should end in wedlock ? What a punishment would this come out to be, upon myself too, that all this while I have been plundering my own treasury ?

But, Jack, two things I must insist upon with thee, if this is to be the case---Having put secrets of so high a nature between me and my spouse into thy power, I must, for my own honour and the honour of my wife and my illustrious progeny, first oblige thee to give up the letters I have so profusely scribbled to thee ; and, in the next place, do by thee, as I have heard whisper'd in France was done by the *true* father of a certain monarque ; that is to say, cut thy throat, to prevent thy telling of tales.

I have found means to heighten the kind opinion my friends here have begun to have of me, by communicating to them the contents of the four last letters which I wrote to press my elected spouse to solemnize. My Lord has repeated one of his phrases in my favour, that he hopes it will come out, *That the devil is not quite so black as he is painted.*

Now pr'ythee, dear Jack, since so many good consequences are to flow from these our nuptials (one of which to thyself ; since the sooner thou dieft, the less thou wilt have to answer for) ; and that I now-and-then am apt to believe there may be something in the old fellow's notion, who once told us, that he who kills a man, has all that man's sins to answer for, as well as his own, because he gave him not the time to repent of them, that Heaven design'd to allow him (A fine thing for thee, if thou consentest to be knock'd of the head ; but a cursed one for the manslayer!) ; and since there may be room to fear, that Miss Howe will not give us her help ; I pr'ythee now exert thyself to find out my Clarissa Harlowe, that I may make a LOVELACE of her. Set all the city bellmen, and the country criers, for ten miles round the metropolis, at work, with their " O yes's ! and if any man, woman or child can give tale or tidings"—Advertise her in all the news-papers ; and let her know, " That if she will

" repair to Lady Betty Lawrance, or to Miss Charlotte  
 " Montague, she may hear of something greatly to her  
 " advantage."



My two cousins Montague are actually to set out to-morrow, to Mrs. Howe's, to engage her vixen daughter's interest with her friend: To flaunt it away in a chariot and fix, for the greater state and significance.

Confounded mortification to be reduced thus low! ...  
 My pride hardly knows how to brook it.

Lord M. has engaged the two venerables to stay here, to attend the issue: And I, standing very high at present in their good graces, am to gallant them to Oxford, to Blenheim, and several other places.

## LETTER XXXIV.

*Miss Howe, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.*

*Thursday night, July 13.*

Collins sets not out to-morrow. Some domestic occasion hinders him. Rogers is but now return'd from you, and cannot well be spared. Mr. Hickman is gone upon an affair of my mother's, and has taken both his servants with him, to do credit to his employer: So I am forced to venture this by the post, directed by your assumed name.

I am to acquaint you, that I have been favoured with a visit from Miss Montague and her sister, in Lord M.'s chariot and fix. My Lord's gentleman rode here yesterday, with a request that I would receive a visit from the two young ladies, on a *very particular occasion*; the greater favour, if it might be the next day.

As I had so little personal knowlege of either, I doubted not but it must be in relation to the interests of my dear friend; and so consulting with my mother, I sent them an invitation to favour me (because of the distance) with their company at dinner; which they kindly accepted.

I hope, my dear, since things have been so *very bad*, that their errand to me will be as agreeable to you, as any thing that can now happen. They came in the name

of Lord M. and his two Sisters, to desire my interest to engage you to put yourself into the protection of Lady Betty Lawrence; who will not part with you, till she sees all the justice done you, that now can be done.

Lady Sarah Sadleir had not stirr'd out for a twelve-month before, never since she lost her agreeable daughter, whom you and I saw at Mrs. Benson's: But was induced to take this journey by her sister, purely to procure you reparation, if possible. And their joint strength, united with Lord M.'s, has so far succeeded, that the wretch has bound himself to them, and to these young ladies, in the solemnest manner, to wed you in their presence, if they can prevail upon you to give him your hand.

This consolation you may take to yourself, that all this honourable family have a *due*, that is, the *highest* sense of your merit, and greatly admire you. The horrid creature has not spared himself in doing justice to your virtue; and the young ladies gave us such an account of his confessions, and self-condemnation, that my mother was quite charmed with you; and we all four shed tears of joy, that there is one of our sex (I, that that one is my dearest friend), who has done so much honour to it, as to deserve the self-convicted praises he gave you; tho' pity for the excellent creature mixed with the sensibility.

He promises by them to make the best of husbands; and my Lord, and his two sisters, are both to be guarantees that he will be so. Noble settlements, noble presents, they talked of: They say, they left Lord M. and his two sisters talking of nothing else but of those presents and settlements, how most to do you honour, the greater in proportion for the indignities you have suffered; and of changing of names by act of parliament, preparative to the interest they will all join to make, to get the titles to go where the bulk of the estate must go, at my Lord's death, which they apprehend to be nearer than they wish. Nor doubt they of a thorough reformation in his morals, from your example, and influence over him.

I made a great many objections for you---All, I believe, that you could have made yourself, had you been present. But I have no doubt to advise you, my dear (and so does my mother), instantly to put yourself into Lady Betty's

protection, with a resolution to take the wretch for your husband: All his future grandeur (he wants not pride) depends upon his sincerity to you; and the young ladies vouch for the depth of his concern for the wrongs he has done you.

All his apprehension is, in your readiness to communicate to every one, as he fears, the evils you have suffer'd; which he thinks will expose you both. But had you not revealed them to Lady Betty, you had not had so warm a friend; since it is owing to two letters you wrote to her, that all this good, as I hope it will prove, was brought about. But I advise you to be more sparing in exposing what is past, whether you have thoughts of accepting him, or not: For what, my dear, can that avail now, but to give a handle to vile wretches to triumph over your friends; since every one will not know how much to your honour your very sufferings have been?

Your melancholy letter brought by Rogers (a), with his account of your indifferent health, confirmed to Rogers by the woman of the house, as well as by your looks, and by your faintness while you talk'd with him, would have given me inexpressible affliction, had I not been clear'd by this agreeable visit from the young ladies. I hope you will be equally so, on my imparting the subject of it to you.

Indeed, my dear, you must not hesitate: You ~~must~~ oblige them: The alliance is splendid and honourable. Very few will know any thing of his brutal baseness to you. All ~~must~~ end, in a little while, in a general reconciliation; and you will be able to resume your course of doing the good to every deserving object, which procured you blessings where-ever you set your foot.

I am concern'd to find, that your father's rash wish affects you so much as it does. Upon my word, my dear, your mind is weaken'd grievously. You must not, indeed you must not, desert yourself. The penitence you talk of—It is for *them* to be penitent who hurried you into evils you could not well avoid. You judge by the unhappy event, rather than upon the true merits of your cast. Upon my honour, I think you faultless in almost every

step

(a) See Letter xxvii. p. 89, preceding.

step you have taken. What has not that vilely insolent and ambitious, yet stupid, brother of yours to answer for?—That spiteful thing your sister too!—

But come, since what is past cannot be help'd, let us look forward. You have now happy prospects opening to you: A family, *already noble*, ready to receive and embrace you with open arms and joyful hearts; and who, by their love to you, will teach another family (who know not what an excellence they have confederated to persecute) how to value you. Your prudence, your piety, will crown all: It will reclaim a wretch, that for an hundred sakes more than for his own, one would wish to be reclaimed.

Like a traveller, who has been put out of his way by the overflowing of some rapid stream, you have only had the fore-right path you were in overwhelmed. A few miles about, a day or two only lost, as I may say, and you are in a way to recover it; and, by quickening your speed, will get up the lost time. The hurry upon your spirits, mean time, will be all your inconvenience; for it was not your fault you were stopt in your progress.

Think of this, my dear; and improve upon the allegory, as you know how. If you can, without impeding your progress, be the means of assuaging the inundation; of bounding the waters within their natural channel, and thereby of recovering the overwhelmed path for the sake of future passengers who travel the same way, what a merit will yours be!—

I shall impatiently expect your next letter. The young ladies proposed, that you should put yourself, if in town, or near it, into the Reading stage-coach, which inns somewhere in Fleet-street: And if you give notice of the day, you will be met on the road, and that pretty early in your journey, by some of both sexes; one of whom you won't be sorry to see.

Mr. Hickman shall attend you at Slough; and Lady Betty herself, and one of the Misses Montague, with proper equipages, will be at Reading to receive you; and carry you directly to the seat of the former: For I have expressly stipulated, that the wretch himself shall not come

into your presence till your nuptials are to be solemnized, unless you give leave.

Adieu, my dearest friend: Be happy: And hundreds will then be happy of consequence. Inexpressibly so, I am sure, will then be

*Your ever-affectionate,*

ANNA HOWE.

### LETTER XXXV.

*Miss Howe, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.*

*My dearest friend,*

*Sunday night, July 16.*

WHY would you permit a mind so much devoted to your service, to labour under such an impatience as you must know it *would* labour under, for want of an answer to a letter of such consequence to *you*, and therefore to *me*? --- Rogers told me last Thursday, you were so ill: Your letter sent by him was *so* melancholy! --- Yet you must be ill indeed, if you could not write something to such a letter; were it but a line, to say you would write as soon as you could. Sure you have received it. The master of our nearest post-office will pawn his reputation that it went safe: I gave him particular charge of it.

God send me good news of your health, of your ability to write; and then I will chide you---Indeed I will---as I never yet did chide you.

I suppose your excuse will be, that the subject required consideration---Lord! my dear, so it might: But you have so right a mind, and the matter in question is so obvious, that you could not want half an hour to determine--- Then you intended, probably, to wait Collins's call for your letter as on to-morrow! --- Suppose---Miss! ---(indeed I am angry with you! suppose) something were to happen, as it did on Friday, that he should not be able to go to town to-morrow? --- How, child, could you serve me so? --- I know not how to leave off scolding you!

Dear, honest Collins, make haste: He will: He will. He sets out, and travels all night: For I have told him, that the dearest friend I have in the world has it in her own choice to be happy, and to make me so; and that the letter he will bring from her, will assure it to me.

I have

I have order'd him to go directly (without stopping at the Saracen's-head inn) to you at your lodgings. Matters are now in so good a way, that he safely may.

Your expected letter is ready written, I hope: If it be not, he will call for it at your hour.

You can't be so happy as you deserve to be: But I doubt not that you will be as happy as you can; that is, that you will choose to put yourself instantly into Lady Betty's protection. If you would not have him for *your own sake*; have him you must, for *mine*, for *your family's*, for *your honour's sake*! --- Dear, honest Collins, make haste! make haste! and relieve the impatient heart of my Beloved's

*Ever-faithful, ever-affectionate,*

ANNA HOWE.

## LETTER XXXVI.

*Miss Howe, To Miss Charlotte Montague.*

Madam, *Tuesday Morning, July 18.*

I take the liberty to write to you, by this special messenger: In the phrensy of my soul I write to you, to demand of you, and of any of your family who can tell, news of my beloved friend; who, I doubt, has been spirited away by the base arts of one of the blackest—O help me to a name bad enough to call him by!—Her piety is proof against self-attempts: It must, it must be Him, the only Him, who could injure such an innocent; and now—who knows what he has done with her!

If I have patience, I will give you the occasion of this distracted vehemence.

I wrote to her the very moment you and your sister left me. But being unable to procure a special messenger, as I intended, was forced to send by the post. I urged her (you know, I promised, that I would), I urged her with earnestness, to comply with the desires of all your family. Having no answer, I wrote again on Sunday night; and sent it by a particular hand, who travelled all night; chiding her for keeping a heart so impatient as mine in such cruel suspense, upon a matter of so much importance to

G 4 her;

her; and therefore to me. And very angry I was with her in my mind.

But, judge my astonishment, my distraction, when last night, the messenger, returning post-haste, brought me word, that she had not been heard of since Friday morning! And that a letter lay for her at her lodgings, which came by the post; and must be mine.

She went out about six that morning; only intending, as they believe, to go to morning prayers at Covent-garden church, just by her lodgings, as she had done divers times before: Went on foot!—Left word she should be back in an hour—Very poorly in health!

Lord, have mercy upon me! What shall I do!—I was a distracted creature all last night!

O Madam! You know not how I love her!—She was my earthly saviour, as I may say!—My own soul is not dearer to me, than my Clarissa Harlowe!—Nay, she *is* my soul!—For I now have none!—Only a miserable one, however!—For she was the joy, the stay, the prop of my life! Never woman loved woman as we love one another! It is impossible to tell you half her excellencies. It was my glory and my pride, that I was capable of so fervent a love of so pure and matchless a creature!—But now!—Who knows, whether the dear injured has not all her woes, her undeserved woes! completed in death; or is not reserved for a worse fate!—This I leave to your inquiry—For—your—(shall I call the man—your) relation, I understand, is still with you.

Surely, my good Ladies, you were well authorized in the proposals you made me in presence of my mother! Surely he dare not abuse your confidence, and the confidence of your noble relations. I make no apology for giving you this trouble, nor for desiring you to favour with a line by this messenger

*Your almost distracted*

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XXXVII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

*M. Hall, Sat. night, July 15.*

A LL undone, undone, by Jupiter!—Zounds, Jack, what shall I do now! A curse upon all my plots and contrivances!—But I have it!—In the very heart and soul of me, I have it!

Thou toldest me, that my punishments were but beginning! — Canst thou, O fatal prognosticator! canst thou tell me, where they will end?

Thy assistance I bespeak: The moment thou receivest this, I bespeak thy assistance. This messenger rides for life and death!—And I hope he'll find you at your town-lodgings; if he meet not with you at Edgware; where, being Sunday, he will call first.

This cursed, cursed woman, on Friday dispatched man and horse with the joyful news, as she thought it would be to me, in an exulting letter from Sally Martin, that she had found out my angel as on Wednesday last; and on Friday morning, after she had been at prayers at Covent-garden church—praying for my reformation, perhaps!—got her arrested by two sheriffs officers, as she was returning to her lodgings, who put her into a chair they had in readiness, and carried her to one of the cursed fellows houses.

She has arrested her for 150*l.* pretendedly due for board and lodgings: A sum, besides the low villainy of the proceeding, which the dear soul could not possibly raise; all her cloaths and effects, except what she had on, and with her, when she went away, being at the old devil's!

And here, for an aggravation, has the dear creature lain already two days; for I must be gallanting my two aunts and my two cousins, and giving Lord M. an airing after his lying-in: Pox upon the whole family of us!—And returned not till within this hour: And now returned to my distraction, on receiving the cursed tidings, and the exulting letter.

Hasten, hasten, dear Jack; for the love of God, hasten to the injured charmer! My heart bleeds for her! — She deserved

deserved not This!—I dare not stir!—It will be thought done by my contrivance:—And if I am absent from this place, that will confirm the suspicion.

Damnation seize quick this accursed woman!—Yet she thinks she has made no small merit with me!—Unhappy, thrice unhappy circumstance!—At a time too, when better prospects were opening for the sweet creature!

Hasten to her!—Clear me of this cursed job. Most sincerely, by all that's sacred, I swear you may!—Yet have I been such a villainous plotter, that the charming sufferer will hardly believe it; altho' the proceeding be so drittly low!

Set her free, the moment you see her: Without conditioning, free!—On your knees, for me, beg her pardon: And assure her, that, where-ever she goes, I will not molest her: No, nor come near her, without her leave: And be sure allow not any of the damned crew to go near her—Only, let her permit *you* to receive her commands from time to time: You have always been her friend and advocate. What would I now give, had I permitted you to have been a successful one!

Let her have all her cloaths and effects sent her instant: ly, as a small proof of my sincerity. And force upon the dear creature, who must be moneyless, what sums you can get her to take. Let me know, how she has been treated: If roughly, woe be to the guilty!

Take thy watch in thy hand, after thou hast freed her, and damn the whole brood, dragon and serpents, by the hour, till thou'rt tired; and tell them, I bid thee do so, for their cursed officiousness.

They had nothing to do, when they had found her, but to wait my orders how to proceed.

The great devil fly away with them all, one by one, thro' the roof of their own cursed house, and dash them to pieces against the tops of chimneys, as he flies; and let the lesser devils collect their scattered scraps, and bag them up, in order to put them together again in their allotted place, in the element of fire, with cements of molten lead.

*A line! A line! A kingdom for a line!* with tolerable news, the first moment thou canst write!—This fellow waits to bring it!

L E T.

## LETTER XXXVIII.

*Miss Charlotte Montague, To Miss Howe.**M. Hall, Tuesday afternoon.**Dear Miss Howe,*

YOUR letter has infinitely disturbed us all.  
This wretched man has been half distracted ever since Saturday night.

We knew not what ailed him, till your letter was brought.

Vile wretch as, he is, he is however innocent of this new evil.

Indeed he is, he *must* be; as I shall more at large acquaint you.

But will not now detain your messenger.

Only to satisfy your just impatience, by telling you, that the dear young lady is safe, and, we hope, well.

A horrid mistake of his general orders has subjected her to the terror and disgrace of an arrest.

Poor dear Miss Harlowe! her sufferings have endeared her to us, almost as much as her excellencies can have done to you.

But she must be now quite at liberty.

He has been a distracted man, ever since the news was brought him; and we knew not what ailed him.

But that I said before.

My Lord M. my Lady Sarah Sadleir, and my Lady Betty Lawrance, will all write to you this very afternoon.

And so will the wretch himself.

And fend it by a servant of their own, not to detain yours.

I know not what I write.

But you shall have all the particulars, just, and true, and fair, from,

*Dear Madam,**Your most faithful and obedient Servant,**CH. MONTAGUE.*

## LETTER XXXIX.

*Miss MONTAGUE, To Miss HOWE.**Dear Madam,**M. Hall, July 18.*

**I**N pursuance of my promise, I will minutely inform you of every-thing we know, relating to this shocking transaction.

When we returned from you on Thursday night, and made our report of the kind reception both we and our message met with, in that you had been so good as to promise to use your interest with your dear friend ; it put us all into such good humour with one another, and with my cousin Lovelace, that we resolved upon a little tour of two days, the Friday and Saturday, in order to give an airing to my Lord, and Lady Sarah ; both having been long confined, one by illness, the other by melancholy. My Lord, his two sisters, and myself, were in the coach ; and all our talk was of dear Miss Harlowe, and of our future happiness with her. Mr. Lovelace, and my sister, who is his favourite, as he is hers, were in his Phaeton : And whenever we joined company, that was still the subject.

As to him, never man praised a lady, as he did her : Never man gave greater hopes, and made better resolutions. He is none of those that are governed by interest. He is too proud for that. But most sincerely delighted was he in talking of her ; and of his hopes of her returning favour. He said, however, more than once, that he feared she would not forgive him ; for, from his heart, he must say, he deserved not her forgiveness : And often, and often, that there was not such a woman in the world.

This I mention to shew you, Madam, that he could not at this very time be privy to such a barbarous and disgraceful treatment.

We returned not till Saturday night, all in as good humour with one another, as we went out. We never had such pleasure in his company before : If he would be good, and as he ought to be, no man would be better beloved by relations than he. But never was there a greater alteration in man when he came home, and received a

letter from a messenger, who, it seems, had been flattering himself in hopes of a reward, and had been waiting for his return from the night before. In *such* a fury!—The man fared but badly. He instantly shut himself up to write, and ordered man and horse to be ready to set out before day-light the next morning, to carry the letter to a friend in London.

He would not see us all that night; neither breakfast nor dine with us next day. He ought, he said, never to see the light; and bid my sister, whom he called an *Innocent* (and she being very desirous to know the occasion of all this), shun him; saying, He was a wretch, and made so by his own inventions, and the consequences of them.

None of us could get out of him what so disturbed him. We should too soon hear, he said, to the utter dissipation of all *his* hopes, and all *ours*.

We could easily suppose, that all was not right with regard to the worthy young lady.

He was out each day; and said, he wanted to run away from himself.

Late on Monday night he received a letter from Mr. Belford, his most favoured friend, by his own messenger; who came back in a foam, man and horse. Whatever were the contents, he was not easier, but like a madman rather: But still would not let us know the occasion. But to my sister, he said, Nobody, my dear Patsey, who can think but of half the plagues that pursue an intriguing spirit, would ever quit the right path.

He was out, when your messenger came: But soon came in; and bad enough was his reception from us all. And he said, that his own torments were greater than ours, than Miss Harlowe's, or yours, Madam, all put together. He would see your letter. He always carries every thing before him: And said, when he had read it, that He thanked God, he was not such a villain, as you, with too much reason, thought him.

Thus then he owned the matter to be:

He had left general directions to the people of the lodgings the dear lady went from, to find out where she was gone to, if possible, that he might have an opportunity

nity to importune her to be his, before their difference was public. The wicked people, *officious* at least, if not wicked, discovered where she was on Wednesday; and, for fear she should remove before they could have his orders, they put her under a *gentle restraint*, as they call it; and dispatched away a messenger to acquaint him with it; and to take his orders.

This messenger arrived here on Friday afternoon; and tarried till we returned on Saturday night:—And when he read the letter he brought—I have told you, Madam, what a fury he was in.

The letter he retired to write, and which he dispatched away so early on Sunday morning, was to conjure his friend Mr. Belford, on receipt of it, to fly to the lady, and set her free; and to order all her things to be sent her; and to clear him of so black and villainous a fact, as he justly called it.

And by this time, he doubts not that all is happily over; and the Beloved of his soul (as he calls her at every word) in an easier and happier way than she was before the horrid fact. And now he owns, that the reason why Mr. Belford's letter set him into stronger ravings, was because of his keeping him wilfully, and on purpose to torment him, in suspense; and reflecting very heavily upon him (for Mr. Belford, he says, was ever the lady's friend and advocate), and only mentioning, that he had waited upon her; referring to his next for further particulars; which he could have told him at the time.

He declares, and we can vouch for him, that he has been, ever since last Saturday night, the miserablest of men.

He forbore going up himself, that it might not be imagined he was guilty of so black a contrivance; and went up to complete any base views in consequence of it.

Believe us all, dear Miss Howe, under the deepest concern at this unhappy accident; which will, we fear, exasperate the charming sufferer; not too much for the occasion, but too much for our hopes.

O what wretches are these free-living men, who love to tread in intricate paths; and, when once they enter, know not how far out of the way their headstrong course may lead them!

My sister joins her thanks with mine to your good mother and self, for the favours you heaped upon us last Thursday. We beseech your continued interest as to the subject of our visit. It shall be all our studies to oblige, and recompense, the dear lady, to the utmost of our power, for what she has suffered from the unhappy man.

We are, dear Madam,

*Your obliged and faithful Servants,*

CHARLOTTE }  
MARTHA } MONTAGUE,

*Dear Miss Howe,*

WE join in the above request of Miss Charlotte and Miss Patty Montague, for your favour and interest; being convinced, that the accident was an accident; and no plot or contrivance of a wretch too full of them. We are, Madam,

*Your most obedient humble Servants,*

M.

SARAH SADLER.

ELIZ. LAWRENCE.

*Dear Miss Howe,*

AFTER what is written above, by names and characters of such unquestionable honour, I might have been excused signing a name almost as hateful to myself, as I KNOW it is to you. But the *above* will have it so. Since therefore I *must* write, it shall be the truth; which is, That, if I may be once more admitted to pay my duty to the most deserving and most injured of her sex, I will be content to do it with a halter about my neck; and attended by a parson on my right-hand, and the hangman on my left, be doomed, at her will, either to the church or the gallows.

Tuesday,  
July 18.

*Your most humble Servant,*

ROBT. LOVELACE.

## LETTER XL.

MR. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

*Sunday night, July 16.*

WHAT a cursed piece of work hast thou made of it, with the most excellent of women! Thou mayest

mayest be in earnest, or in jest, as thou wilt ; but the poor lady will not be long either thy sport, or the sport of fortune !

I will give thee an account of a scene that wants but her affecting pen to represent it justly ; and it would wring all the black blood out of thy callous heart.

Thou only, who art the author of her calamities, shouldest have attended her in her prison. I am unequal to such a task : Nor know I any other man but would.

This last act, however unintended by thee, yet a consequence of thy general orders, and too likely to be thought agreeable to thee, by those who know thy other villainies by her, has finished thy barbarous work. And I advise thee to trumpet forth every-where, how much in earnest thou art to marry her, whether thou art or not.

Thou mayest *safely* do it. She will not live to put thee to the trial ; and it will a little palliate for thy enormous usage of her, and be a means to make mankind, who know not what I know of the matter, herd a little longer with thee, and forbear to hunt thee to thy fellow-savages in the Libyan wilds and deserts.

Your messenger found me at Edgware, expecting to dinner with me several friends, whom I had invited three days before. I sent apologies to them, as in a case of life and death ; and speeded to town to the wicked woman's : For how knew I but shocking attempts might be made upon her by the cursed wretches ; perhaps by thy contrivance, in order to mortify her into thy measures ?

Little knows the public what villainies are committed in these abominable houses, upon innocent creatures drawn into their snares !

Finding the lady not there, I posted away to the officer's, altho' Sally told me, that she had been but just come from thence ; and that she had refused to see her, or, as she sent down word, any-body else ; being resolved to have the remainder of that Sunday to herself, as it might, perhaps, be the last she should ever see.

I had the same thing told me, when I got thither.

I sent up to let her know, that I came with a commission to set her at liberty. I was afraid of sending up the name of a man known to be thy friend. She absolutely refused

refused to see *any man*, however, for that day, or to answer further to any thing said from me.

Having therefore informed myself of all that the officer, and his wife, and servant, could acquaint me with, as well in relation to the horrid arrest, as to her behaviour, and the womens to her; and her ill state of health; I went back to Sinclair's, as I will still call her, and heard the three womens story: From all which, I am enabled to give thee the following shocking particulars: Which may serve, till I can see the unhappy lady herself to-morrow, if then I can gain admittance to her. Thou wilt find, that I have been very minute in my inquiries.

Thy villain it was, that set the poor lady, and had the impudence to appear, and abet the sheriff's officers in the cursed transaction. He thought, no doubt, that he was doing the most acceptable service to his blessed master. They had got a chair; the head ready up, as soon as Service was over. And as she came out of the church, at the door fronting Bedford-street, the officers, stepping to her, whispered, that they had an action against her.

She was terrified, trembled, and turned pale.

*Action!* said she. What is that?—I have committed so bad *action*!—Lord bleſs me! Men, what mean you?

That you are our prisoner, Madam?

*Prisoner, Sirs!* — What—How—Why—What have I done?

You must go with us. Be pleased, Madam, to step into this chair.

With *you*!—With *men*!—Must go with *men*!—I am not used to go with *strange men*!—Indeed you must excuse me!

We can't excuse you: We are sheriff's-officers.—We have a Writ against you. You *must* go with us, and you shall know at whose Suit.

*Suit!* said the charming innocent; I don't know what you mean. Pray, men, don't lay hands upon me!—They fering to put her into the chair. I am not used to be us treated!—I have done nothing to deserve it.

She then spied thy villain—O thou wretch, said she, here is thy vile master?—Am I again to be *his prisoner*? help, good people!

A croud had before begun to gather.

My master is in the country, Madam, many miles off;  
If you please to go with these men, they will treat you  
civilly.

The people were most of them struck with compassion,  
A fine young creature! — A thousand pities! some.—  
While some few threw out vile and shocking reflections;  
But a gentleman interposed, and demanded to see the fel-  
lows authority.

They shewed it. Is your name Clarissa Harlowe, Ma-  
dam? said he.

Yes, yes, indeed, ready to sink, my name was Cla-  
rissa Harlowe:—But it is now *Wretchedness!*—Lord be  
merciful to me! what is to come next?

You *must* go with these men, Madam, said the gentle-  
man: They have authority for what they do. He pitied  
her, and retired.

Indeed you *must*, said one chairman.

Indeed you *must*, said the other.

Can no-body, joined in another gentleman, be applied  
to, who will see that so fine a creature is not ill used?

Thy villain answered, Orders were given particularly  
for that. She had rich relations. She need but ask and  
have. She would only be carried to the officer's house,  
till matters could be made up. The people she had lodged  
with, loved her: But she had left her lodgings privately.

O! had she those tricks already? cried one or two.

She heard not this—But said, Well, if I *must* go, I  
*must*!—I cannot resist—But I will not be carried to the  
woman's!—I will rather die at your feet, than be car-  
ried to the woman's!

You won't be carried there, Madam, cried thy fellow.  
Only to *my* house, Madam, said one of the officers.  
Where is That?

In High-Holborn, Madam.

I know not where High-Holborn is: But any-where,  
except to the woman's.—But am I to go with *men* only?

Looking about her, and seeing the three passages, to  
wit, that leading to Henrietta-street, that to King-street,  
and the fore-right one, to Bedford-street, crowded, she  
started—Any-where—Any-where, said she, but to the wo-  
man's!

man's ! And stepping into the chair, threw herself on the seat, in the utmost distress and confusion — Carry me, carry me out of sight — Cover me — Cover me up — for ever ! — were her words.

Thy villain drew the curtains : She had not power ; and they went away with her, thro' a vast croud of people.

Here I must rest. I can write no more at present. Only, Lovelace, remember, *All this was to a Clarissa !!!*



THE unhappy lady fainted away when, she was taken out of the chair at the officer's house.

Several people followed the chair to the very house, which is in a wretched court. Sally was there ; and satisfied some of the inquirers, that the young gentlewoman would be exceedingly well used : And they soon dispersed.

Dorcas was also there ; but came not in her sight. Sally, as a favour, offered to carry her to her former lodgings : But she declared, they should carry her thither a corpse, if they did.

Very gentle usage the women boast of : So would a vultur, could it speak, with the entrails of its prey upon its rapacious talons. Of this thou'l judge, from what I have to recite.

She asked, What was meant by this usage of her ?— People told me, said she, that I *must* go with the men !— That they had authority to take me : So I submitted. But now, what is to be the end of this disgraceful violence ?

The end, said the vile Sally Martin, is, for honest people to come at their own.

Bles me ! Have I taken away any thing that belongs to those who have obtained this power over me ?—I have left very valuable things behind me ; but have taken nothing away, that is not my own.

And who do you think, *Miss Harlowe*, for I understand, said the cursed creature, you are not married ; who do you think is to pay for your board and your lodgings ; such handsome lodgings ! for so long a time as you were at Mrs. Sinclair's ?

Lord have mercy upon me ! Miss Martin (I think you are

are Miss Martin)!—And is this the cause of such a disgraceful insult upon me in the open streets?

And cause enough, *Miss Harlowe* (fond of gratifying her jealous revenge, by calling her *Miss*)—One hundred and fifty guineas, or pounds, is no small sum to lose—And by a young creature, who would have bilked her lodgings!

You amaze me, Miss Martin!—What language do you talk in?—*Bilk my lodgings!*—What is that?

She stood astonished, and silent for a few moments.

But recovering herself, and turning from her to the window, she wrung her hands [The cursed Sally shewed me how!]; and lifting them up—Now, Lovelace! Now indeed do I think I *ought* to forgive thee!—But who shall forgive Clarissa Harlowe!—O my sister! O my brother! Tender mercies were your cruelties to *this*!

After a pause, her handkerchief drying up her falling tears, she turned to Sally! Now, have I nothing to do but acquiesce—Only let me say, That if this aunt of yours, This Mrs. Sinclair; or This man, This Mr. Lovelace; come near me; or if I am carried to the horrid house (for that I suppose is to be the end of this new outrage); God be merciful to the poor Clarissa Harlowe!—Look to the consequence!—Look, I charge you, to the consequence!

The vile wretch told her, It was not designed to carry her any-whither against her will: But, if it were, they should take care not to be frightened again by a penknife.

She cast up her eyes to heaven, and was silent—And went to the farthest corner of the room, and, sitting down, threw her handkerchief over her face.

Sally asked her several questions: But not answering her, she told her, She would wait upon her by-and-by, when she had found her speech.

She ordered the people to press her to eat and drink. She must be fasting: Nothing but her prayers and tears, poor thing! were the merciless devil's words, as she owned to me.—Dost think I did not curse her?

She went away; and, after her own dinner, returned.

The unhappy lady, by this devil's account of her, then seemed either mortified into meekness, or to have made a resolution

resolution not to be provoked by the insults of this cursed creature.

Sally inquired, in her presence, whether she had eat or drank any-thing; and being told by the woman, that she could not prevail upon her to taste a morsel, or drink a drop, she said, This is wrong, *Miss Harlowe!* Very wrong!—Your religion, I think, should teach you, that starving yourself is self-murder.

She answered not.

The wretch owned, she was resolved to make her speak.

She asked, If Mabell should attend her, till it were seen what her friends would do for her, in discharge of the debt? Mabell, said she, has not yet earned the cloaths you were so good as to give her.

Am I not worth an answer, *Miss Harlowe?*

I would answer you (said the sweet sufferer, without any emotion), if I knew how.

I have ordered pen, ink, and paper, to be brought you, *Miss Harlowe.* There they are. I know you love writing. You may write to whom you please. Your friend Miss Howe will expect to hear from you.

I have no friend, said she. I deserve none.

Rowland, for that is the officer's name, told her, She had friends enow to pay the debt, if she would write.

She would trouble no-body; she had no friends; was all they could get from her, while Sally staid: But yet spoken with a patience of spirit, as if she enjoyed her griefs.

The insolent creature went away, ordering them in her hearing to be very civil to her, and to let her want for nothing. Now had she, she owned, the triumph of her heart over this haughty beauty, who kept them all at such a distance in their own house!

*What thinkest thou, Lovelace, of this!—This wretch's triumph was over a Clarissa!*

About six in the evening, Rowland's wife pressed her to drink tea. She said, She had rather have a glass of water; for her tongue was ready to cleave to the roof of her mouth.

The woman brought her a glass, and some bread and butter. She tried to taste the latter; but could not swallow

low it : But eagerly drank the water ; lifting up her eyes in thankfulness for that !!!

*The divine Clarissa, Lovelace — reduced to rejoice for a cup of cold water ! — By whom reduced !*

About nine o'clock she asked, If any-body were to be her bedfellow ?

Their maid, if she pleased ; or, as she was so weak and ill, the girl should sit up with her, if she chose she should.

She chose to be alone, both night and day, she said. But might she not be trusted with the keys of the room where she was to lie down ; for she should not put off her cloaths ?

That, they told her, could not be.

She was afraid not, she said.—But indeed she would not get away, if she could.

They told me, that they had but one bed, besides that they lay in themselves ; which they would fain have had her accept of ; and besides *that* their maid lay in, in a garret, which they called, a hole of a garret : And that *that* one bed was the prisoner's bed ; which they made several apologies to me about. I suppose it is shocking enough.

But the lady would not lie in theirs. Was she not a prisoner, she said ?—Let her have the prisoners room.

Yet they owned that she started, when she was conducted thither. But recovering herself, Very well, said she—Why should not all be of a piece ?—Why should not my wretchedness be complete ?

She found fault, that all the fastenings were on the outside, and none within ; and said, She could not trust herself in a room, where others could come in at their pleasure, and she not go out. She had not been used to it !!!

*Dear, dear soul ! — My tears flow as I write. — Indeed, Lovelace, she had not been used to such treatment !*

They assured her, that it was as much their duty to protect her from other persons insults, as from escaping herself.

Then they were people of more honour, she said, than she had of late been used to !

She asked, If they knew Mr. Lovelace ?

No, was their answer.

Have you heard of him ?

No.

Well then, you may be good sort of folks in your way.  
Pause here a moment, Lovelace!—and reflect—I must.

AGAIN they asked her, If they should send any word to her lodgings?

These are my lodgings now, are they not?—was all her answer.

She sat up in a chair all night, the back against the door; having, it seems, thrust a broken piece of a poker thro' the staples where a bolt had been on the inside.

NEXT morning Sally and Polly both went to visit her.

She had begged of Sally the day before, that she might not see Mrs. Sinclair, nor Dorcas, nor the broken-toothed servant, called William.

Polly would have ingratiated herself with her; and pretended to be concerned for her misfortunes. But she took no more notice of her than of the other.

They asked, If she had any commands?—If she bad, she only need to mention what they were, and she should be obeyed.

None at all, she said.

How did she like the people of the house? Were they civil to her?

Pretty well, considering she had no money to give them.

Would she accept of any money? They could put it to her account.

She would contract no debts.

Had she any money about her?

She meekly put her hand in her pocket, and pulled out half a guinea, and a little silver. Yes, I have a little.—But here should be fees paid, I believe. Should there not? I have heard of entrance-money to compound for not being stript. But these people are very civil people, I fancy; for they have not offered to take away my cloaths.

They have orders to be civil to you.

It is very kind.

But we two will bail you, Miss, if you will go back with us to Mrs. Sinclair's.

Not for the world!

Hers are very handsome apartments.

The

The fitter for those who own them !

These are very sad ones.

The fitter for me !

You may be very happy yet, *Miss*, if you will.

I hope I shall.

If you refuse to eat or drink, we will give bail, and take you with us.

Then I will try to eat and drink. Any-thing but go with you.

Will you not send to your new lodgings ? The people will be frighted.

So they will, if I send. So they will, if they know where I am.

But have you no things to send for from thence ?

There is what will pay for their lodgings and trouble : I shall not lessen their security.

But perhaps letters or messages may be left for you there.

I have very few friends ; and to those I have, I will spare the mortification of knowing what has befallen me.

We are surprised at your indifference, *Miss Harlowe*. Will you not write to any of your friends ?

No.

Why, you don't think of tarrying here always ?

I shall not live always.

Do you think you are to stay here, as long as you live ?

That's as it shall please God, and those who have brought me hither.

Should you like to be at liberty ?

I am miserable ! — What is liberty to the miserable, but to be more miserable !

How, miserable, *Miss* ? — You may make yourself as happy as you please.

I hope you are both happy.

We are.

May you be more and more happy !

But we wish you to be so too.

I never shall be of your opinion, I believe, as to what happiness is.

What do you take our opinion of happiness to be ?

To live at Mrs. Sinclair's.

Perhaps, said Sally, we were once as squeamish and narrow-minded as you.

How

How came it over with you ?

Because we saw the ridiculousness of prudery.

Do you come hither to persuade me to hate prudery,  
as you call it, as much as you do ?

We came to offer our service to you.

It is out of your power to serve me.

Perhaps not.

It is not in my inclination to trouble you.

You may be worse offered.

Perhaps I may.

You are mighty short, *Miss*.

As I wish your visit to be, ladies.

They owned to me, that they cracked their fans, and  
laughed.

Adieu, perverse Beauty !

Your servant, Ladies.

Adieu, Haughty-airs !

You see me humbled —

As you deserve, *Miss* Harlowe. Pride will have a fall.

Better fall with what *you* call pride, than stand with  
meanness.

Who does ?

I had once a better opinion of *you*, *Miss* Horton ! —

Indeed you should not insult the miserable.

Neither should the miserable, said Sally, insult people  
for their civility.

I should be sorry if I did.

Mrs. Sinclair shall attend you by-and-by, to know if  
you have any commands for *her*.

I have no wish for any liberty, but that of refusing to  
see her, and one more person.

What we came for, was, to know if you had any pro-  
posals to make for your enlargement ?

Then, it seems, the officer put in. You have very  
good friends, Madam, I understand. Is it not better that  
you make it up ? Charges will run high. A hundred and  
fifty guineas are easier paid than two hundred. Let these  
ladies bail you, and go along with them ; or write to your  
friends to make it up.

Sally said, There is a gentleman who saw you taken,  
and was so much moved for you, *Miss Harlowe*, that he

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would

would gladly advance the money for you, and leave you to pay it when you can.

See, Lovelace, what cursed devils these are! This is the way, we know, that many an innocent heart is thrown upon keeping, and then upon the town. But for these wretches thus to go to work with such an angel as this!—How glad would have been the devilish Sally, to have had the least handle to report to thee a listening ear, or patient spirit, upon this hint!

Sir, said she, with high indignation, to the officer, did not you say last night, that it was as much your business to protect me from the insults of others, as from escaping?—Cannot I be permitted to see whom I please; and to refuse admittance to those I like not?

Your creditors, Madam, will expect to see you.

Not, if I declare I will not treat with them.

Then, Madam, you will be sent to prison.

Prison, friend!—What dost thou call thy house?

Not a prison, Madam.

Why these iron-barred windows then? Why these double locks, and bolts all on the outside, none on the In?

And down she dropt into her chair, and they could not get another word from her. She threw her handkerchief over her face, as once before, which was soon wet with tears; and grievously, they own, she sobbed.

*Gentle treatment, Lovelace! — Perhaps thou, as well as these wretches, wilt think it so!*

Sally then ordered a dinner, and said, They would soon be back again, and see that she eat and drank, as a good Christian should, comporting herself to her condition, and making the best of it.

What has not this charming creature suffered; what has she not gone thro' in these last three months, that I know of!—Who would think such a delicately-framed person could have sustained what she has sustained? We sometimes talk of bravery, of courage, of fortitude!—Here they are in perfection!—Such bravoes as Thou and I should never have been able to support ourselves under half the persecutions, the disappointments, and contumelies, that *she* has met with; but, like cowards, should have fled out of the world, basely, by some back-door; that is

to say, by a sword, by a pistol, by a halter, or knife!—But here is a fine-principled lady, who, by dint of this noble consideration, as I imagine (what else can support her?)—That she has *not deserved the evils* *she contends with*; and that *this world is designed but as a transitory state of probation*; and that she is *traveling to another, and better*; puts up with all the hardships of the journey; and is not to be diverted from her course by the attacks of *thieves and robbers*, or any other terrors and difficulties; *being assured of an ample reward at the end of it!*

If thou thinkest this reflection uncharacteristic, from a companion and friend of thine, imaginest thou, that I profited nothing by my attendance on my uncle for so long a time, in his dying state; and from the pious reflections of the good clergyman, who, day by day, at the poor man's own request, visited and prayed by him?—And could I have another such instance *as this*, to bring all these reflections home to me?

Then who can write of good persons, and of good subjects, and be capable of *admiring them*, and not be made serious for the *time*, if he write in character?—And hence may we gather, what a benefit to the morals of men the keeping of *good company* must be; while those who keep only *bad*, must necessarily more and more harden, and be hardened.



'Tis twelve of the clock, Sunday night --- I can think of nothing but of this excellent creature. Her distresses fill my head and my heart. I was drowsy for a quarter of an hour; but the fit is gone off. And I will continue the melancholy subject from the information of these wretches. Enough, I dare say, will arise in the visit I shall make, if admitted to-morrow, to send by thy servant, as to the way I am likely to find her in.

After the women had left her, she complained of her head and her heart; and seemed terrified with apprehensions of being carried once more to Sinclair's.

Refusing any-thing for breakfast, Mrs. Rowland came up to her, and told her (as these wretches owned they had ordered her, for fear she should starve herself), That she *must and should have tea, and bread and butter!*

And that, as she had friends who could support her, if she wrote to them, it was a wrong thing, both for herself and *them*, to starve herself thus.

If it be for *your own sakes*, said she, that is another thing : Let coffee, or tea, or chocolate, or what you will, be got : And put down a chicken to my account every day, if you please, and eat it yourselves. I will taste it, if I can. I would do nothing to hinder you : I have friends will pay you liberally, when they know I am gone.

They wonder'd at her strange composure, in such distresses.

They were nothing, she said, to what she had suffer'd already, from the vilest of all men. The disgrace of seizing her in the street ; multitudes of people about her ; shocking imputations wounding her ears ; had indeed been very affecting to her. But that was over--- Every thing soon would ! --- And she should be still *more* composed, were it not for the apprehensions of seeing one man, and one woman ; and being tricked or forced back to the vilest house in the world.

Then were it not better to give way to the two gentle-womens offer to bail her ? --- They could tell her, it was a very kind proffer ; and what was not be met with every day.

She believ'd so.

The ladies might, possibly, dispense with her going back to the house she had such an antipathy to. Then the compassionate gentleman, who was inclined to make it up with her creditors on her own bond, it was strange to them she hearkened not to so generous a proposal.

Did the two ladies tell you who the gentleman was ? --- Or, Did they say any more on that subject ?

Yes, they did ; and hinted to me, said the woman, that you had nothing to do, but to receive a visit from the gentleman, and the money, they believed, would be laid down on your own bond or note.

She was startled.

I charge you, said she, as you will answer it one day to my friends, that you bring no gentleman into my company. I charge you don't. If you do, you know not what may be the consequence.

They apprehended no bad consequence, they said, in doing their duty: And if she knew not her own good, her friends would thank them for taking any innocent steps to serve her, tho' against her will.

Don't push me upon extremities, man! --- Don't make me desperate, woman! --- I have no small difficulty, notwithstanding the seeming composure you just now took notice of, to bear, as I ought to bear, the evils I suffer. But if you bring a man or men to me, be the pretence what it will ----

She stopt there, and look'd so earnestly, and so wildly, they said, that they did not know but she would do some harm to herself, if they disobeyed her; and that would be a sad thing in *their* house, and might be their ruin. So they promised, that no man should be brought to her, but by her own consent.

Mrs. Rowland prevailed on her to drink a dish of tea, and taste some bread and butter, about eleven on Saturday morning: Which she probably did, to have an excuse not to dine with the women, when they returned.

But she would not quit her *prison-room*, as she called it, to go into their parlour.

" Unbarred windows, and a lightsomer apartment, she said, had too cheerful an appearance for her mind."

At another time, " The light of the sun was irksome to her. The sun seemed to shine in to mock her woes."

And when, soon after, a shower fell, she looked at it thro' the bars: " How kindly, said she, do the elements weep, to keep me company!"

" Methought, added she, the sun darting in, a while ago, and gilding those iron bars, played upon me, like the two women, who came to insult my haggard looks; by the word *Beauty*; and my dejected heart, with the word *Haughty-airs!*"

Sally came again at dinner-time, to see how she fared, as she told her; and that she did not starve herself: And, as she wanted to have some talk with her, if she gave her leave, she would dine with her.

I cannot eat.

You must try, *Miss Harlowe.*

And, dinner being ready just then, she offered her hand, and desired her to walk down.

No; she would not stir out of her *prison-room*.

These sullen airs won't do, *Miss Harlowe*: Indeed they won't.

She was silent.

You will have harder usage than any you have ever yet known, I can tell you, if you come not into some humour to make matters up.

She was still silent.

Come, *Miss*, walk down to dinner. Let me intreat you, do. *Miss Horton* is below: She was once your favourite.

She waited for an answer: But received none.

We came to make some proposals to you, for your good; tho' you affronted us so lately. And we would not let *Mrs. Sinclair* come in person, because we thought to oblige you.

That is indeed obliging.

Come, give me your hand, *Miss Harlowe*: You are obliged to me, I can tell you That: And let us go down to *Miss Horton*.

Excuse me: I will not stir out of this room.

Would you have me and *Miss Horton* dine in this filthy bed-room?

It is not a bed-room to me. I have not been in bed; nor will, while I am here.

And yet you care not, as I see, to leave the house.— And so you won't go down, *Miss Harlowe*?

I won't, except I am forced to it.

Well, well, let it alone. I sha'n't ask *Miss Horton* to dine in this room, I assure you. I will send up a plate.

*And away the little saucy toad fluttered down.*

And when they had dined, up they came together.

Well, *Miss*, you would not eat any thing, it seems!— Very pretty sullen airs these!—No wonder the honest gentleman had such a hand with you.

She only held up her hands and eyes; the tears trickling down her cheeks.

*Insolent devils!—How much more cruel and insulting are bad women, even than bad men!*

Methinks,

Methinks, *Miss*, said Sally, you are a little *soily*, to what we have seen you. Pity such a nice lady should not have changes of apparel. Why won't you send to your lodgings for linen, at least?

I am not nice now.

*Miss* looks well and clean in any thing, said Polly. But, dear Madam, why won't you send to your lodgings? It is but kind to the *people*. They must have a concern about you. And your *Miss Howe* will wonder what's become of you; for, no doubt, you correspond.

She turned from them, and, to herself, said, *Too much! Too much!*—She tossed her handkerchief, wet before with her tears, from her, and held her apron to her eyes.

Don't weep, *Miss*! said the vile Polly.

Yet *do*, cry'd the viler Sally, if it be a relief. Nothing, as Mr. Lovelace once told *me*, dries sooner than tears. For once I too wept mightily.

I could not bear the recital of this with patience. Yet I cursed them not so much as I should have done, had I not had a mind to get from them all the particulars of their *gentle* treatment; and this for two reasons; the one, that I might stab thee to the heart with the repetition; the other, that I might know upon what terms I am likely to see the unhappy lady to-morrow.

Well, but, *Miss Harlowe*, cry'd Sally, do you think these *forlorn airs* pretty? You are a good Christian, child. Mrs. Rowland tells *me*, she has got you a Bible-book—O there it lies!—I make no doubt, but you have doubled down the *useful places*, as honest Matt. Prior says.

Then rising, and taking it up—Ay, so you have—The *Book of Job*! One opens naturally here, I see—*My mamma* made me a fine bible-scholar.—*Ecclesiasticus* too!—That's *Apocrypha*, as they call it—You see, *Miss Horton*, I know something of the book.

They proposed once more to bail her, and to go home with them. A motion which she received with the same indignation as before.

Sally told her, That she had written in a very favourable manner, in her behalf, to you, and that she every hour expected an answer; and made no doubt, that you

would come up with the messenger, and generously pay the whole debt, and ask her pardon for neglecting it.

This disturbed her so much, that they feared she would have fallen into fits. She could not bear your name, she said. She hoped, she should never see you more: And were you to intrude yourself, dreadful consequences might follow.

Surely, they said, she would be glad to be released from her confinement.

Indeed she *should*, now they had begun to alarm her with *his* name, who was the author of all her woes: And who, she now saw plainly, gave way to this new outrage, in order to bring her to his own infamous terms.

Why then, they asked, would she not write to her friends, to pay Mrs. Sinclair's demand?

Because she hoped she should not long trouble anybody; and because she knew, that the payment of the money, if she were able to pay it, was not what was aimed at.

Sally owned, that she told her, That, truly, she had thought herself as well descended and as well educated as herself, tho' not intitled to such considerable fortunes. And had the impudence to insist upon it to me to be truth.

She had the insolence to add, to the lady, That she had as much reason as *she*, to expect Mr. Lovelace would marry her; he having contracted to do so *before* he knew Miss Clarissa Harlowe: And that she had it under his hand and seal too—or else he had not obtained his end: Therefore, it was not likely she should be so officious as to do his work against herself, if she thought Mr. Lovelace had designs upon her, like what she *presumed* to hint at: That, for her part, her only view was, to procure liberty to a young gentlewoman, who made those things grievous to her, which would not be made such a rout about by anybody else — and to procure the payment of a just debt to her friend Mrs. Sinclair.

She besought them to leave her. She wanted not these instances, she said, to convince her of the company she was in: And told them, that, to get rid of such visitors, and of still worse that she apprehended, she would write

to one friend to raise the money for her ; tho' it would be death for her to do so ; because that friend could not do it without her mother, in whose eye it would give a selfish appearance to a friendship, that was above all sordid alloys.

They advised her to write out of hand.

But how much must I write for ? What is the sum ? Should I not have had a bill delivered me ?—God knows, I took not your lodgings. But he that could treat me, as he has done, could do this !

Don't speak against Mr. Lovelace, *Miss Harlowe*. He is a man I greatly esteem [Cursed toad !]. And, 'bating that he will take his advantage, where he can, of *U's* silly credulous girls, he is a man of honour.

She lifted up her hands and eyes, instead of speaking ; And well she might ! For any words she could have used, could not have expressed the anguish she must feel, on being comprehended in the *U.S.*

She must write for one hundred and fifty guineas, at least : Two hundred, if she were short of money, might as well be written for.

Mrs. Sinclair, she said, had all her cloaths. Let them be sold, *fairly* sold, and the money go as far as it would go. She had also a few other valuables ; but no money (none at all), but the poor half-guinea, and the little silver they had seen. She would give bond to pay all that her apparel, and the other matters she had, would fall short of. She had great effects belonging to her of right. Her bond would, and must, be paid, were it for a thousand pounds. But her cloaths she should never want. She believed, if not too much undervalued, those, and her few valuables, would answer every-thing. She wished for no surplus, but to discharge the last expences ; and forty shillings would do as well for those, as forty pounds. Let my ruin, said she, lifting up her eyes, be *LARGE*, be *COMPLETE*, *in this life* !—For a composition, let it be *COMPLETE* — And there she stopped. No doubt alluding to her father's futurely-extended curse !

The wretches could not help wishing to me for the opportunity of making such a purchace for their own wear. How I cursed *them* ! and, in my heart, *thee* ! — But too probable, thought I, that this vile Sally Martin may hope

[Tho' thou art incapable of it], that *her Lovelace*, as she has the assurance, behind thy back, to call thee, may present her with some of the poor lady's spoils!

Will not Mrs. Sinclair, proceeded she, think my cloaths a security, till they can be sold? They are very good cloaths. A suit or two but just put on, as it were; never worn. They cost much more than is demanded of me. *My father loved to see me fine.*—All shall go. But let me have the particulars of her demand. I suppose I must pay for my *destroyer* (that was her well-adapted word!), and his servants, as well as for myself.—I am content to do so—Indeed I am content to do so—I am above wishing, that any-body, who could *thus* act, should be so much as expostulated with, as to the justice and equity of it. If I have but enough to pay the demand, I shall be satisfied; and will leave the baseness of such an action as this, as an aggravation of a guilt, which I thought could not be aggravated.

I own, Lovelace, I have malice in this particularity, in order to sting thee to the heart. And, let me ask thee, What now thou canst think of thy barbarity, thy unprecedented barbarity, in having reduced a person of her rank, fortune, talents, and virtue, so low?

The wretched women, it must be owned, act but in their profession; a profession thou hast been the principal means of reducing these two to act in. And they know what thy designs have been, and how far prosecuted. It is, in their opinions, using her *gently*, that they have forbore to bring to her the woman so justly odious to her; and that they have not threatened her with the introducing to her strange men: Nor yet brought into her company their *spirit-breakers*, and *bumbling-drones* (fellows not allowed to carry stings), to trace and force her back to their detested house; and, when there, into all their measures.

Till I came, they thought thou wouldst not be displeased at any-thing she suffered, that could help to mortify her into a state of shame and disgrace; and bring her to comply with thy views, when thou shouldst come to release her from these wretches, as from a greater evil than cohabiting with thee.

When thou considerest these things, thou wilt make no difficulty

difficulty of believing, that this their own account of their behaviour to this admirable lady, has been far short of their insults : And the less, when I tell thee, that, all together, their usage had such effects upon her, that they left her in violent hysterics ; ordering an apothecary to be sent for, if she should continue in them, and be worse ; and particularly (as they had done from the first) that they kept out of her way any edged or pointed instrument ; especially a penknife ; which, pretending to mend a pen, they said, she might ask for.

At twelve Saturday night, Rowland sent to tell them, that she was so ill, that he knew not what might be the issue ; and wished her out of his house.

And this made them as heartily wish to hear from you. For their messenger, to their great surprize, was not then returned from M. Hall. And they were sure he must have reached that place by Friday night.

Early on Sunday morning, both devils went to see how she did. They had such an account of her weakness, lowness, and anguish, that they forbore, out of compassion, they said, finding their visits so disagreeable to her, to see her. But their apprehension of what might be the issue was, no doubt, their principal consideration : Nothing else could have softened such flinty bosoms.

They sent for the apothecary Rowland had had to her, and gave him, and Rowland, and his wife, and maid, paradyful injunctions for the utmost care to be taken of her : No doubt, with an Old-Bailey forecast. And they sent up to let her know what orders they had given : But that, understanding she had taken something to compose herself, they would not disturb her.

She had scrupled, it seems, to admit the apothecary's visit over-night, because he was a M A N :—And could not be prevailed upon, till they pleaded *their own safety* to her.

They went again, from church — Lord, Bob, these creatures go to church ! — But she sent them down word, that she must have all the remainder of the day to herself.

When I first came, and told them of thy execrations for what they had done, and joined my own to them, they were astonished. The mother said, she had thought she had known Mr. Lovelace better ; and expected thanks, and not curses.

While I was with them, came back halting and cursing, most horribly, their messenger; by reason of the ill-usage he had received from you, instead of the reward he had been taught to expect, for the supposed good news that he carried down, of the lady's being found out, and secured.—A pretty fellow! art thou not, to abuse people for the consequences of thy own faults?

Under what shocking disadvantages, and with this addition to them, that I am thy friend and intimate, am I to make a visit to this unhappy lady to-morrow morning: In thy name too!—Enough to be refused, that I am of a sex, to which, for thy sake, she has so justifiable an aversion: Nor, having such a tyrant of a father, and such an implacable brother, has she reason to make an exception in favour of any of it on their accounts.

It is three o'clock. I will close here; and take a little rest: What I have written will be a proper preparative for what shall offer by-and-by.

Thy servant is not to return without a letter, he tells me; and that thou expectest him back in the morning. Thou hast fellows enough where thou art, at thy command. If I find any difficulty in seeing the lady, thy messenger shall post away with this.—Let him look to broken bones, and other consequences, if what he carries answer not thy expectation. But, if I am admitted, thou shalt have this and the result of my audience both together. In the former case, thou mayest send another servant to wait the next advices, from

J. BELFORD.

## LETTER XLI.

Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

Monday, July 17.

**A**BOUT six this morning I went to Rowland's. Mrs. Sinclair was to follow me, in order to dismiss the action; but not to come in sight.

Rowland, upon inquiry, told me, that the lady was extremely ill; and that she had desired, not to let anybody but his wife or maid come near her.

I said,

I said, I *must* see her. I had told him my business over-night; and I *must* see her.

His wife went up: But returned presently, saying, She could not get her to speak to her; yet that her eye-lids moved; tho' she either would not, or could not, open them, to look up at her.

Oons, woman, said I, the lady may be in a fit: The lady may be dying.—Let me go up. Shew me the way.

A horrid hole of a house, in an alley they call a court; stairs wretchedly narrow, even to the first-floor rooms: And into a den they led me, with broken walls, which had been papered, as I saw by a multitude of tacks, and some torn bits held on by the rusty heads.

The floor indeed was clean, but the ceiling was smoked with variety of figures, and initials of names, that had been the woful employment of wretches, who had no other way to amuse themselves.

A bed at one corner, with coarse curtains tacked up at the feet to the ceiling; because the curtain rings were broken off; but a coverlid upon it with a cleanish look, tho' plaguily in tatters, and the corners tied up in tassels, that the rents in it might go no farther.

The windows dark and double-barred, the tops boarded up to save mending; and only a little four-paned eylet-hole of a casement to let in air; more, however, coming in at broken panes, than could come in at That.

Four old turkey-worked chairs, bursten-bottomed, the stuffing staring out.

An old, tottering, worm-eaten table, that had more nails bestowed in mending it to make it stand, than the table cost fifty years ago, when new.

On the mantle-piece was an iron shove-up candlestick, with a lighted candle in it, twinkle, twinkle, twinkle, four of them, I suppose, for a penny.

Near that, on the same shelf, was an old looking-glass, cracked thro' the middle, breaking out into a thousand points; the crack given it, perhaps, in a rage, by some poor creature, to whom it gave the representation of his heart's woes in his face.

The chimney had two half-tiles in it on one side, and one whole one on the other; which shewed it had been in better

better plight ; but now the very mortar had followed the rest of the tiles, in every other place, and left the bricks bare.

An old half-barred stove-grate was in the chimney ; and in that a large stone-bottle without a neck, filled with baleful eugh, as an ever-green, withered southern-wood, and sweet-briar, and sprigs of rue in flower.

To finish the shocking description, in a dark nook stood an old, broken-bottomed cane couch, without a squab, or coverlid, sunk at one corner, and unmortised, by the failing of one of its worm-eaten legs, which lay in two pieces under the wretched piece of furniture it could no longer support.

*And This, thou horrid Lovelace, was the bedchamber of the divine Clarissa !!!*

I had leisure to cast my eye on these things : For, going up softly, the poor lady turned not about at our entrance; nor, till I spoke, moved her head.

She was kneeling in a corner of the room, near the dismal window, against the table, on an old bolster, as it seemed to be, of the cane couch, half-covered with her handkerchief ; her back to the door; which was only shut to (No need of fastenings !); her arms crossed upon the table, the fore-finger of her right-hand in her bible. She had perhaps been reading in it, and could read no longer. Paper, pens, ink, lay by her book, on the table. Her dress was white damask, exceeding neat ; but her stays seemed not tight-laced. I was told afterwards, that her faces had been cut, when she fainted away at her entrance into this cursed place ; and she had not been solicitous enough about her dress, to send for others. Her head-dress was a little discomposed ; her charming hair, in natural ringlets, as you have heretofore described it, but a little tangled, as if not lately kembed, irregularly shading one side of the loveliest neck in the world ; as her disordered, rumpled handkerchief did the other. Her face [O how altered from what I had seen it ! Yet lovely in spite of all her griefs and sufferings !] was reclined, when we entered, upon her crossed arms ; but so, as not more than one side of it to be hid.

When I surveyed the room around, and the kneeling lady,

lady, sunk with majesty too in her white, flowing robes [for she had not on a hoop], spreading the dark, tho' not dirty, floor, and illuminating that horrid corner; her linen beyond imagination white, considering that she had not been undressed ever since she had been here; I thought my concern would have choaked me. Something rose in my throat, I know not what, which made me, for a moment, guggle, as it were, for speech: Which, at last, forcing its way, Con-Con-Confound you both, said I to the man and woman, is this an apartment for such a lady? And could the cursed devils of her own sex, who visited this suffering angel, see her, and leave her, in so damned a nook?

Sir, we would have had the lady to accept of our own bedchamber; but she refused it. We are poor people—And we expect no-body will stay with us longer than they can help it.

You are people chosen purposely, I doubt not, by the damned woman who has employed you: And if your usage of this lady has been but half as bad as your house, you had better never to have seen the light.

Up then raised the charming sufferer her lovely face; but with such a significance of woe overspreading it, that I could not, for the soul of me, help being visibly affected.

She waved her hand two or three times towards the door, as if commanding me to withdraw; and displeased at my intrusion; but did not speak.

Permit me, Madam—I will not approach one step farther without your leave—Permit me, for one moment, the favour of your ear!

No—No—Go, go; M A N, with an emphasis—And would have said more; but, as if struggling in vain for words, she seemed to give up speech for lost, and dropp'd her head down once more, with a deep sigh, upon her left arm; her right, as if she had not the use of it (numbed, I suppose), self-moved, dropping down on her side.

O that thou hadst been there! and in my place!—But by what I then felt, in myself, I am convinced, that a capacity of being moved by the distresses of our fellow-creatures, is far from being disgraceful to a manly heart. With what pleasure, at that moment, could I have given up my own life, could I but first have avenged this charming

ing creature, and cut the throat of her *destroyer*, as she emphatically calls thee, tho' the friend that I best love! And yet, at the same time, my heart and my eyes gave way to a softness, of which (tho' not so hardened a wretch as thou) it was never before so susceptible.

I dare not approach you, dearest Lady, without your leave: But on my knees I beseech you to permit me to release you from this damned house, and out of the power of the accursed woman, who was the occasion of your being here!

She lifted up her sweet face once more, and beheld me on my knees. Never knew I before what it was to pray so heartily.

Are you not—Are you not Mr. Belford, Sir? I think your name is Belford?

It is, Madam, and I ever was a worshiper of your virtues, and an advocate for you; and I come to release you from the hands you are in.

And in whose to place me? O leave me, leave me! Let me never rise from this spot! Let me never, never more believe in man!

This moment, dearest Lady, this very moment, if you please, you may depart whithersoever you think fit. You are absolutely free, and your own mistress.

I had now as lieve die here in this place, as any where. I will owe no obligation to any friend of *him* in whose company you have seen me. So, pray, Sir, withdraw.

Then turning to the officer, Mr. Rowland I think your name is? I am better reconciled to your house than I was at first. If you can but engage, that I shall have no-body come near me but your wife; no *Man*! and neither of those women, who have sported with my calamities; I will die with you, and in this very corner. And you shall be well satisfied for the trouble you have had with me.—I have value enough for that—for, see, I have a diamond ring; taking it out of her bosom; and I have friends will redeem it at a high price, when I am gone.

But for *you*, Sir, looking at me, I beg you to withdraw. If you mean me well, God, I hope, will reward you for your good meaning; but to the friend of my *destroyer* will I not owe an obligation.

You

You will owe no obligation to me, nor to any-body. You have been detained for a debt you do not owe. The action is dismissed; and you will only be so good as to give me your hand into the coach which stands as near to this house as it could draw up. And I will either leave you at the coach-door, or attend you whithersoever you please, till I see you safe where you would wish to be.

Will you then, Sir, *compel* me to be beholden to you?

You will inexpressibly oblige me, Madam, to command me to do you either service or pleasure.

Why then, Sir—looking at me—But why do you mock me in that humble posture! Rise, Sir! I cannot speak to you else.

I arose.

Only, Sir, take this ring. I have a sister, who will be glad to have it, at the price it shall be valued at, for the *former* owner's sake!—Out of the money she gives, let this man be paid; handsomely paid: And I have a few valuables more at my lodgings (Dorcas, or the MAN William, can tell where that is); let them, and my cloaths at the wicked woman's, where you have seen me, be sold, for the payment of my lodging first, and next of your friend's debts, that I have been arrested for; as far as they will go; only reserving enough to put me into the ground, any-where, or any-how, no matter.—Tell your friend, I wish it may be enough to satisfy the whole demand; but if it be not, he must make it up himself; or, if he think fit to draw for it on Miss Howe, she will repay it, and with interest, if he insist upon it.—And this, Sir, if you promise to perform, you will do me, as you offer, both pleasure and service: And say you *will*, and take the ring, and withdraw. If I want to say any-thing more to you (you seem to be an humane man), I will let you know:—And so, Sir, God bless you.

I approached her, and was going to speak—

Don't speak, Sir: Here's the ring.

I stood off.

And won't you take it? Won't you do this last office for me?—I have no other person to ask it of; else, believe me, I would not request it of *you*. But take it or not; laying it upon the table—you must withdraw, Sir: I am very

very ill. I would fain get a little rest, if I could. I find I am going to be bad again.

And offering to rise, she sunk down thro' excess of weakness and grief, in a fainting fit.

Why, Lovelace, wast thou not present thyself?—Why dost thou commit such villainies, as even thou thyself art afraid to appear in; and yet puttest a weaker heart and head upon encountering with?

The maid coming in just then, the woman and she lifted her up, on the decrepit couch; and I withdrew with this Rowland; who wept like a child, and said, he never in his life was so moved.

*Yet so hardened a wretch art thou, that I question whether thou wilt shed a tear at my relation.*

They recovered her by harts-horn and water: I went down mean while; for the detestable woman had been below some time. O how did I curse her! I never before was so fluent in curses.

She tried to wheedle me; but I renounced her; and, after she had dismissed the action, sent her away crying, or pretending to cry, because of my behaviour to her.

You will observe, that I did not mention one word to the lady about you. I was afraid to do it. For 'twas plain, that she could not bear your name: Your friend, and the company you have seen me in, were the words nearest to naming you, she could speak: And yet I wanted to clear your intention of this brutal, this sordid-looking, villainy.

I sent up again, by Rowland's wife, when I heard that the lady was recovered, beseeching her to quit that devilish place; and the woman assured her, that she was at full liberty to do so; for that the action was dismissed.

But she cared not to answer her: And was so weak and low, that it was almost as much out of her power as inclination, the woman told me, to speak.

I would have hastened away for my friend doctor H. but the house is such a den, and the room she was in such a hole, that I was ashamed to be seen in it by a man of his reputation, especially with a woman of such an appearance, and in such uncommon distress; and I found there

was

was no prevailing on her to quit it for the peoples bedroom, which was neat and lightsome.

The strong room, she was in, the wretches told me, should have been in better order, but that it was but the very morning that she was brought in, that an unhappy man had quitted it; for a more eligible prison, no doubt; since there could hardly be a worse.

Being told, that she desired not to be disturbed, and seemed inclined to dose, I took this opportunity to go to her lodgings in Covent-garden; to which Dorcas (who first discovered her there, as Will: was the letter from church) had before given me a direction.

The man's name is Smith, a dealer in gloves, snuff, and such petty merchandize: His wife the shopkeeper: He a maker of the gloves they sell. Honest people, it seems.

I thought to have got the woman with me to the lady; but she was not within.

I talked with the man, and told him what had befallen the lady; owing, as I said, to a mistake of orders; and gave her the character she deserved; and desired him to send his wife, the moment she came in, to the lady; directing him whither; not doubting, that her attendance would be very welcome to her: Which he promised.

He told me, that a letter was left for her there on Saturday; and, about half an hour before I came, another, superscribed by the same hand; the first, by the post; the other, by a countryman; who, having been informed of her absence, and of all the circumstances they could tell him of it, posted away, full of concern, saying, that the lady he was sent from would be ready to break her heart at the tidings.

I thought it right to take the two letters back with me; and, dismissing my coach, took a chair, as a more proper vehicle for the lady, if I (the friend of her *destroyer*) could prevail upon her to leave Rowland's.

And here being obliged to give way to an indispensable avocation, I will make thee taste a little in thy turn, of the plague of suspense; and break off, without giving thee the least hint of the issue of my further proceedings. I know, that those least bear disappointment, who love most to give it. In twenty instances, hast thou afforded me

me proof of the truth of this observation. And I matter not thy raving.

Another letter, however, shall be ready, send for it as soon as thou wilt. But, were it not, have I not written enough to convince thee, that I am

*Thy ready and obliging friend,*

J. BELFORD?

## LETTER XLII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq.

Monday, July 17. eleven at night.

CURSE upon thy hard heart, thou vile caitiff! How hast thou tortured me, by thy designed *abruption!* 'Tis impossible that Miss Harlowe should have ever suffered as thou hast made me suffer, and as I now suffer!

That Sex is made to bear pain. It is a curse, that the first of it intailed upon all her succeeding daughters, when she brought the curse upon us all. And they love those best, whether man or child, who give them most—But to stretch upon thy damned tenter-hooks such a spirit as mine—No rack, no torture, can equal my torture!

And must I still wait the return of another messenger? Confound thee for a malicious devil! I wish thou wert a post-horse, and I upon the back of thee! How would I whip and spur, and harrow up thy clumsy sides, till I made thee a ready-roasted, ready-flayed, mess of dog's meat; all the hounds in the county howling after thee as I drove thee, to wait my dismounting, in order to devour thee peace-meal; life still throbbing in each churned mouthful!

Give this fellow the sequel of thy tormenting scribble. Dispatch him away with it. Thou hast promised it shall be ready. Every cushion or chair I shall sit upon, the bed I shall lie down upon (if I go to bed), till he return, will be stuffed with bolt-upright awls, bodkins, corking-pins, and packing-needles: Already I can fancy, that to pink my body like my mind, I need only to be put into a hogshead stuck full of steel-pointed spikes, and rolled down a hill three times as high as the Monument.

But

But I lose time, yet know not how to employ it, till this fellow returns with the sequel of thy soul-harrowing intelligence!

### LETTER XLIII.

*Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;*

*Monday-night, July 17.*

ON my return to Rowland's, I found that the apothecary was just gone up. Mrs. Rowland being above with him, I made the less scruple to go up too, as it was probable, that to ask for leave would be to ask to be denied; hoping also, that the letters I had with me would be a good excuse.

She was sitting on the side of the broken couch, extremely weak and low; and, I observed, cared not to speak to the man; and no wonder; for I never saw a more shocking fellow, of a profession tolerably genteel, nor heard a more illiterate one prate—Physician in ordinary to this house, and others like it, I suppose! He put me in mind of Otway's apothecary in his *Caius Marius*:

*Meagre and very rueful were his looks :*

*Sharp misery had worn him to the bones.*

*Famine in his cheeks :*

*Need and oppression staring in his eyes :*

*Contempt and beggary hanging on his back :*

*The world no friend of his, nor the world's law.*

As I am in black, he took me at my entrance, I believe, to be a doctor, and flunked behind me with his hat upon his two thumbs, and looked as if he expected the oracle to open, and give him orders.

The lady looked displeased, as well at me as at Rowland, who followed me, and at the apothecary. It was not, she said, the least of her present misfortunes, that she could not be left to her own sex; and to her option to see whom she pleased.

I besought her excuse; and, winking for the apothecary to withdraw (which he did), told her, that I had been at her new lodgings, to order every-thing to be got ready

ready for her reception ; presuming she would choose to go thither : That I had a chair at the door : That Mr. Smith, and his wife [I named their names, that she should not have room for the least fear of Sinclair's], had been full of apprehensions for her safety : That I had brought two letters, which were left there for her ; one by the post, the other that very morning.

This took her attention. She held out her charming hand for them ; took them, and, pressing them to her lips—From the only friend I have in the world ! said she, kissing them again ; and looking at the seals, as if to see whether they had been opened. I can't read them, said she, my eyes are too dim ; and put them in her bosom.

I besought her to think of quitting that wretched hole.

Where could she go, she asked, to be safe and uninterrupted for the short remainder of her life ; and to avoid being again visited by the creatures who had insulted her before ?

I gave her the solemnest assurances, that she should not be invaded in her new lodgings by any-body ; and said, that I would particularly engage my honour, that *the person who had most offended her should not come near her, without her own consent.*

Your honour, Sir ! Are you not that man's friend ?

I am not a friend, Madam, to his vile actions to the most excellent of women.

Do you flatter me, Sir ? Then are you a MAN.—But Oh, Sir, your friend, holding her face forward with great earnestness, your *barbarous* friend, what has he not to answer for !

There she stopt : Her heart full ; and putting her hand over her eyes and forehead, the tears trickled thro' her fingers : Resenting thy barbarity, it seemed, as Cesar did the stab from his distinguished Brutus !

Tho' she was so very much disordered, I thought I would not lose this opportunity to assert your innocence of this villainous arrest.

There is no defending the unhappy man, in any of his vile actions by you, Madam ; but of this last outrage, by all that's good and sacred, he is innocent !

O wretches ! what a Sex is yours !—Have you all one dialect ?

dialect? Good and sacred!—If, Sir, you can find an oath, or a vow, or an adjuration, that my ears have not been twenty times a day wounded with, then speak it, and I may again believe a MAN.

I was excessively touched at these words, knowing thy baseness, and the reason she had for them.

But say you, Sir; for I would not, methinks, have the wretch capable of this sordid baseness!—Say you, that he is innocent of this *last* wickedness? Can you truly say that he is?

By the great God of Heaven!—

Nay, Sir, if you swear, I must doubt you!—If you yourself think your WORD insufficient, what reliance can I have on your OATH!—O that this my experience had not cost me so dear! But, were I to live a thousand years, I would always suspect the veracity of a swearer. Excuse me, Sir; but is it likely, that he who makes so free with his GOD, will scruple any thing that may serve his turn with his *fellow-creature*?

This was a most affecting reprimand!

Madam, said I, I have a regard, a regard a gentleman ought to have, to my word; and whenever I forfeit it to you—

Nay, Sir, don't be angry with me. It is grievous to me to question a gentleman's veracity. But your friend calls himself a gentleman—You know not what I have suffered by a gentleman!—And then again she wept.

I would give you, Madam, demonstration, if your griefs and your weakness would permit it, that he has no hand in this barbarous baseness: And that he resents it as it ought to be resented.

Well, well, Sir [with quickness], he will have his account to make up somewhere else; not to me. I should not be sorry to find him able to acquit his intention on this occasion. Let him know, Sir, only one thing, that, when you heard me, in the bitterness of my spirit, most vehemently exclaim against the undeserved usage I have met with from him, that even then, in that passionate moment, I was able to say [and never did I see such an earnest and affecting exaltation of hands and eyes], Give him, good God! repentance and amendment; that I may

may be the last poor creature, who shall be ruined by him!—And, in thy own good time, receive to thy mercy, the poor wretch who had *none* on me!

By my soul, I could not speak.—She had not her Bible before her for nothing.

I was forced to turn my head away, and to take out my handkerchief.

What an angel is this!—Even the gaoler, and his wife and maid, wept.

Again, I wish thou hadst been there, that thou mightst have sunk down at her feet, and begun that moment to reap the effect of her generous wishes for thee; undeserving, as thou art, of any-thing but perdition!

I represented to her, that she would be less free where she was, from visits she liked not, than at her own lodg-ing. I told her, that it would probably bring her, in particular, *one visitor*, who, otherwise, I would engage (but I durst not swear again, after the severe reprimand she had just given me), should not come near her, without her consent. And I expressed my surprize, that she should be unwilling to quit such a place as this; when it was more than probable, that some of her friends, when it was known how bad she was, would visit her.

She said, the place, when she was first brought into it, was indeed very shocking to her: But that she had found herself so weak and ill, and her griefs had so sunk her, that she did not expect to have lived till now: That therefore all places had been alike to her; for to die in a prison, *was* to die; and equally eligible as to die in a pa-lace (palaces, she said, could have no attractions for a dying person): But that, since she feared she was not so soon to be released, as she had hoped; since she was so little mistress of herself *here*; and since she might, by removal, be in the way of her dear friend's letters; she would hope, that she might depend upon the assurances I gave her, of being at liberty to return to her last lodg-ings (otherwise she would provide herself with new ones, out of my knowlege, as well as out of yours); and that I was too much of a gentleman, to be concerned in car-rying her back to the house she had so much reason to abhor; and to which she had been once before most vilely betrayed, to her ruin.

I assured her, in the strongest terms (*but swore not*), that you were resolved not to molest her: And, as a proof of the sincerity of my professions, besought her to give me directions (in pursuance of my friend's express desire) about sending all her apparel, and whatever belonged to her, to her new lodgings.

She seemed pleased; and gave me instantly out of her pocket her keys; asking me, If Mrs. Smith, whom I had named, might not attend me; and she would give *her* further directions? To which I chearfully assented; and then she told me, that she would accept of the chair I had offered her.

I withdrew; and took the opportunity to be civil to Rowland and his maid; for she found no fault with their behaviour, for what they *were*; and the fellow seems to be miserably poor. I sent also for the apothecary, who is as poor as the gaoler (and still poorer, I dare say, as to the skill required in his business), and satisfied him beyond his hopes.

The lady, after I had withdrawn, attempted to read the letters I brought her. But she could read but a little way in one of them, and had great emotions upon it.

She told the woman she would take a speedy opportunity to acknowlege their civilities, and to satisfy the apothecary; who might send her his bill to her lodgings.

She gave the maid something; probably, the only half-guinea she had: And then, with difficulty, her limbs trembling under her, and supported by Mrs. Rowland, got down stairs.

I offered my arm: She was pleased to lean upon it. I doubt, Sir, said she, as she moved, I have behaved rudely to you: But, if you knew all, you would forgive me.

I know enough, Madam, to convince me, that there is not such purity and honour in any woman upon earth; nor any one that has been so barbarously treated.

She looked at me very earnestly. What she thought I cannot say; but, in general, I never saw so much foul in a lady's eyes, as in hers.

I ordered my servant (whose mourning made him less observable as such, and who had not been in the lady's eye) to keep the chair in view; and to bring me word,

how she did, when set down. The fellow had the thought to step into the shop just before the chair entered it, under pretence of buying snuff; and so enabled himself to give me an account, that she was received with great joy by the good woman of the house; who told her, she was but just come in; and was preparing to attend her in High-Holborn.— O Mrs. Smith, said she, as soon as she saw her, did you not think I was run away?— You don't know what I have suffered since I saw you. I have been in a prison!— Arrested for debts I owe not!— But, thank God, I am here!— Will you permit your maid—I have forgot her name already—

Katharine, Madam—

Will you let Katharine assist me to bed?— I have not had my cloaths off since Thursday night.

What she further said the fellow heard not, she leaning upon the maid, and going up-stairs.

But dost thou not observe, what a strange, what an uncommon, openness of heart reigns in this lady: *She had been in a prison*, she said, before a stranger in the shop, and before the maid-servant: And so, probably, she would have said, had there been twenty people in the shop.

The disgrace she cannot hide from herself, as she says in her letter to Lady Betty, she is not solicitous to conceal from the world!

But this makes it evident to me, that she is resolved to keep no terms with thee. And yet to be able to put up such a prayer for thee, as she did in her prison [I will often mention the *prison-room*, to tease thee!]; Does not this shew, that revenge has very little sway in her mind; tho' she can retain so much proper resentment?

And this is another excellence in this admirable woman's character: For whom, before her, have we met with in the whole sex, or in ours either, that know how, in *practice*, to distinguish between REVENGE and RESENTMENT, for base and ingrateful treatment?

'Tis a cursed thing, after all, that such a woman as this should be treated as she has been treated. Hadst thou been a king, and done as thou *bast* done by such a meritorious innocent, I believe in my heart, it would have been adjudged to be a national sin, and the sword, the pestilence, or famine,

mine, must have atoned for it!—But, as thou art a private man, thou wilt certainly meet with thy punishment (besides what thou mayest expect from the justice of thy country, and the vengeance of her friends), as she will her reward, HEREAFTER.

It must be so, if there be really such a thing as *future Remuneration*; as now I am more and more convinced there must:—Else, what a hard fate is hers, whose punishment, to all appearance, has so much exceeded her fault? And, as to thine, how can *temporary burnings*, wert thou by some accident to be consumed in thy bed, expiate for thy abominable vileness to her, in breach of all obligations moral and divine?

I was resolved to lose no time in having every-thing which belonged to the lady, at the cursed woman's, sent her. Accordingly, I took coach to Smith's, and procured the lady (to whom I sent up my compliments, and inquiries how she bore her removal), ill as she sent me down word she was, to give proper directions to Mrs. Smith: Whom I took with me to Sinclair's; and who saw every-thing looked out, and put into the trunks and boxes they were first brought in, and carried away in two coaches.

Had I not been there, Sally and Polly would each of them have taken to herself something of the poor lady's spoils. This they declared: And I had something to do to get from Sally a fine Brussels-lace head, which she had the confidence to say she would wear for *Miss Harlowe's* sake. Nor should either I or Mrs. Smith have known she had got it, had she not been in search after the ruffles belonging to it.

My resentment on this occasion, and the conversation which Mrs. Smith and I had (in which I not only expatiated upon the merits of the lady, but expressed my concern for her sufferings; tho' I left her room to suppose her married, yet without averring it), gave me high credit with the good woman: So that we are perfectly well-acquainted already: By which means I shall be enabled to give you accounts, from time to time, of all that passes; and which I will be very industrious to do, provided I may depend upon the solemn promises I have given the lady, in your name, as well as my own, that she shall be free from all personal molestation from you. And thus shall I have

it in my power to return *in kind* your writing favours; and preserve my short-hand besides: Which, till this correspondence was opened, I had pretty much neglected.

I ordered the abandoned women to make out your account. They answered, *That they would do with a vengeance.* Indeed they breathe nothing but revenge. For now they say, you will assuredly marry; and your example will be followed by all your friends and companions—As the old one says, to the utter ruin of her poor house.

## LETTER XLIV.

Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

Tuesday Morn. (July 18.) 6 o'clock.

**H**aving sat up late to finish and seal up in readiness my letter to the above period, I am disturbed before I wished to have risen, by the arrival of thy second fellow; man and horse in a foam.

While he baits, I will write a few lines, most heartily to congratulate thee on thy *expected* rage and impatience; and on thy recovery of mental feeling.

How much does the idea thou givest me of thy deserved torments, by thy upright awls, bodkins, pins, and packing-needles, by thy rolling hogshead with iron spikes, and by thy macerated fides, delight me!

I will, upon every occasion that offers, drive more spikes into thy hogshead, and roll thee down-hill, and up, as thou recoverest to sense, or rather returnest back to *senselessness*. Thou knowest therefore the terms on which thou art to enjoy my correspondence. Am not I, who have all along, and *in time*, protested against thy barbarous and ingrateful perfidies to a lady so noble, intitled to drive remorse, if possible, into thy hitherto-callos heart?

Only let me reinforce one thing, which perhaps I mentioned too slightly before, That the lady was prevailed upon by my solemn assurances *only*, that she might depend upon being free from *your* visits, not to remove to new lodgings, where neither you nor I should be able to find her.

These assurances I thought I might give her, not only because of *your* promise, but because it is necessary for

you to know where she is, in order to address yourself to her by your friends.

Enable me therefore to make good to her this my solemn engagement; or adieu to all friendship, at least to all correspondence, with thee for ever.

J. BELFORD.

### LETTER XLV.

*Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;*

*Tuesday, July 18. Afternoon.*

I Renewed my inquiries after the lady's health, in the morning, by my servant: And, as soon as I had dined, I went myself.

I had but a poor account of it: Yet sent up my compliments. She returned me thanks for all my good offices; and her excuses, that they could not be *personal* just then, being very low and faint: But if I gave myself the trouble of coming about six this evening, she should be able, she hoped, to drink a dish of tea with me, and would then thank me herself.

I am very proud of this condescension; and think it looks not amiss for you, as I am your *avowed* friend. Methinks I want fully to remove from her mind all doubts of you in this last villainous action: And who knows then, what your noble relations may be able to do for you with her, if you hold your mind? For your servant acquainted me with their having actually engaged Miss Howe in their and your favour, before this cursed affair happened. And I desire the particulars of all from yourself, that I may the better know how to serve you.

She has two handsome apartments, a bedchamber and dining-room, with light closets in each. She has already a nurse (the people of the house having but one maid); a woman whose care, diligence, and honesty, Mrs. Smith highly commends. She has likewise the benefit of the voluntary attendance, and *love*, as it seems, of a widow gentlewoman, Mrs. Lovick her name, who lodges over her apartment, and of whom she seems very fond, having found something in her, she thinks, resembling the qualities of her worthy Mrs. Norton.

About seven o' clock this morning, it seems, the lady was so ill, that she yielded to their desires to have an apothecary sent for—Not the fellow, thou mayst believe, she had had before at Rowland's; but one Mr. Goddard, a man of skill and eminence; and of conscience too; demonstrated as well by general character, as by his prescriptions to this lady: For, pronouncing her case to be grief, he ordered, for the present, only innocent julaps, by way of cordial; and, as soon as her stomach should be able to bear it, light kitchen-diet; telling Mrs. Lovick, that That, with air, moderate exercise, and cheerful company, would do her more good, than all the medicines in his shop.

This has given me, as, it seems, it has the lady (who also praises his modest behaviour, paternal looks, and genteel address), a very good opinion of the man; and I design to make myself acquainted with him; and, if he advises to call in a doctor, to wish him, for the fair patient's sake, more than the physician's (who wants not practice), my worthy friend Dr. H.—whose character is above all exception, as his humanity, I am sure, will distinguish him to the lady.

Mrs. Lovick gratified me with an account of a letter she had written from the lady's mouth to Miss Howe; she being unable to write herself with steadiness. It was to this effect; in answer, it seems, to her two letters, whatever were the contents of them:

' That she had been involved in a dreadful calamity, which she was sure, when known, would exempt her from the effects of her friendly displeasure, for not answering her first; having been put under an arrest:— Could she have believed it? — That she was released but the day before: And was now so weak, and so low, that she was obliged to get a widow gentlewoman in the same house to account thus for her silence to her two letters of the 13th and 16th: That she would, as soon as able, answer them: Begged of her, mean time, not to be uneasy for her; since (only that this was a calamity which came upon her when she was far from being well; a load laid upon the shoulders of a poor wretch, ready before to sink under too heavy a burden)

it was nothing to the evil she had before suffered : And one felicity seemed likely to issue from it ; which was, that she should be at rest, in an honest house, with considerate and kind-hearted people ; having assurance given her, that she should not be molested by the wretch, whom it would be death for her to see : So that now she (Miss Howe) needed not to send to her by private and expensive conveyances : Nor need Collins to take precautions for fear of being dogged to her lodgings ; nor she to write by a fictitious name to her, but by her own.'

You see I am in a way to oblige you : You see how much she depends upon my engaging for your forbearing to intrude yourself into her company : Let not your flaming impatience destroy all ; and make me look like a villain to a lady who has reason to suspect *every man* she sees to be so. — Upon this condition, you may expect all the services that can flow from true friendship, and from

Your sincere Wellwisher,

JOHN BELFORD.

## LETTER XLVI.

Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

Tuesday night, July 18.

I AM just come from the lady. I was admitted into the dining-room, where she was sitting in an elbow-chair, in a very weak and low way. She made an effort to stand up, when I entered ; but was forced to keep her seat. You'll excuse me, Mr. Belford : I ought to rise, to thank you for all your kindness to me. I was to blame to be so loth to leave that sad place ; for I am in Heaven here, to what I was there : And good people about me too ! — I have not had good people about me for a long, long time before ; so that (with a half-smile) I had begun to wonder whither they were all gone.

Her nurse and Mrs. Smith, who were present, took occasion to retire : And, when we were alone, You seem to be a person of humanity, Sir, said she : You hinted, as I was leaving my prison, that you were not a stranger to my sad story. If you know it truly, you must know, that I have

been most barbarously treated; and have not deserved it at the man's hands by whom I have suffered.

I told her, I knew enough to be convinced, that she had the merit of a saint, and the purity of an angel: And was proceeding, when she said, No flighty compliments! No undue attributes, Sir! I offered to plead for my sincerity; and mentioned the word *Politeness*, and would have distinguished between That and *Flattery*. Nothing can be polite, said she, that is not just: Whatever I may have had, I have now no vanity to gratify.

I disclaimed all intention of compliment: All I had said, and what I should say, was, and should be, the effect of sincere veneration. My unhappy friend's account of her had intitled her to That.

I then mentioned your grief, your penitence, your resolutions of making her all the amends that were possible now to be made her: And, in the most earnest manner, I asserted your innocence as to the last villainous outrage.

Her answer was to this effect: It is painful to me to think of him. The amends you talk of, cannot be made. This last violence you speak of, is nothing to what preceded it. That cannot be atoned for; nor palliated: This may: And I shall not be sorry to be convinced, that he cannot be guilty of so very low a wickedness.—Yet, after his vile forgeries of hands—after his personating basenesses—what are the iniquities he is not capable of?

I would then have given her an account of the tryal you stood with your friends: Your own previous resolutions of marriage, had she honoured you with the requested *four words*: All your family's earnestness to have the honour of her alliance: And the application of your two cousins to Miss Howe, by general consent, for that young lady's interest with her: But, having just touched upon these topics, she cut me short, saying, That was a cause before another tribunal: Miss Howe's letters to her were upon that subject; and she should write her thoughts to her, as soon as she was able.

I then attempted more particularly to clear you of having any hand in the vile Sinclair's officious arrest; a point she had the generosity to *wish* you cleared of: And, having mentioned the outrageous letter you had written to

me

me on this occasion, she asked, If I had that letter about me?

I owned I had.

She wished to see it.

This puzzled me horribly: For you must needs think, that most of the free things, which, among us Rakes, pass for wit and spirit, must be shocking stuff to the ears or eyes of persons of delicacy of that sex: And then such an air of levity runs thro' thy most serious letters; such a false bravery, endeavouring to carry off ludicrously the subjects that most affect thee; that those letters are generally the least fit to be seen, which ought to be most to thy credit.

Something like this I observed to her; and would fain have excused myself from shewing it: But she was so earnest, that I undertook to read some parts of it, resolving to omit the most exceptionable.

I know thou'l curse me for that; but I thought it better to oblige her, than to be suspected myself; and so not have it in my power to serve thee with her, when so good a foundation was laid for it; and when she knows as bad of thee as I can tell her.

Thou rememb'rest the contents, I suppose, of thy furious letter (a). Her remarks upon the different parts of it which I read to her, were to the following effect:

Upon thy two first lines, *All undone! undone, by Jupiter!* — Zounds, Jack, what shall I do now! *A curse upon all my plots and contrivances!* thus she expressed herself:

‘ O how light, how unaffected with the sense of its own crimes, is the heart that could dictate to the pen this libertine froth!’

The paragraph, which mentions the vile arrest, affected her a good deal.

In the next, I omitted thy curse upon thy relations, whom thou wert gallanting: And read on the seven subsequent paragraphs, down to thy execrable wish; which was too shocking to read to her. What I read produced the following reflections from her:

‘ The plots and contrivances which he curses, and the exultings of the wicked wretches on finding me out, shew me, that all his guilt was premeditated: Nor doubt

' I, that his dreadful perjuries, and inhuman arts, as he went along, were to pass for fine stratagems ; for witty sport ; and to demonstrate a superiority of inventive talents ! — O my cruel, cruel brother ! had it not been for thee, I had not been thrown upon so pernicious and so despicable a plotter ! — But proceed, Sir ; pray proceed.'

At that part, *Canst thou, O fatal prognosticator ! tell me wherè my punishments will end ?* — she sighed : And when I came to that sentence, *Praying for my reformation, perhaps* — Is that there ? said she, sighing again. — Wretched man ! — And shed a tear for thee. — By my faith, Lovelace, I believe she hates thee not ! — She has at least a concern, a generous concern, for thy future happiness ! — What a noble creature hast thou injured !

She made a very severe reflection upon me, on reading these words — *On your knees, for me, beg her pardon* — You had all your lessons, Sir, said she, when you came to redeem me — You was so condescending as to kneel : I thought it was the effect of your own humanity, and good-natured earnestness to serve me : Excuse me, Sir, I knew not, that it was in consequence of a prescribed lesson.'

This concerned me not a little : I could not bear to be thought such a wretched puppet, such a Joseph Leman, such a Tomlinson — I endeavoured therefore, with some warmth, to clear myself of this reflection ; and she again asked my excuse : ' I was avowedly, she said, the friend of a man, whose friendship, she had reason to be sorry to say, was no credit to any-body.' — And desired me to proceed. — I did ; but fared not much better afterwards : For,

On that passage, where you say, *I had always been her friend and advocate*, This was her unanswerable remark : I find, Sir, by this expression, that he had always designs against me ; and that you all along knew that he had : Would to Heaven, you had had the goodness to have contrived some way, that might not have endangered your own safety, to give me notice of his baseness, since you approved not of it ! But you gentlemen, I suppose, had rather see an innocent fellow-creature ruined, than be thought capable of an action, which, however

' however generous, might be likely to loosen the bands of a wicked friendship !'

After this severe but just reflection, I would have avoided reading the following, altho' I had unawares begun the sentence (but she held me to it): *What would I now give, had I permitted you to have been a successful advocate!* And this was her remark upon it—‘ So, Sir, you see, if you had been the happy means of preventing the evils designed me, you would have had your friend's thanks for it, when he came to his consideration. This satisfaction, I am persuaded every-one, in the long run, will enjoy, who has the virtue to withhold, or prevent, a wicked purpose. I was obliged, *I see*, to your kind wishes—But it was a point of honour with you to keep his secret; the greater honour, perhaps, the viler the secret. Yet permit me to wish, Mr. Belford, that you were capable of relishing the pleasures that arise to a benevolent mind from *VIRTUOUS* friendship!—None other is worthy of the sacred name. You seem an humane man: I hope, for your own sake, you will one day experience the difference: And, when you do, think of Miss Howe and Clarissa Harlowe (I find you know much of my sad story), who were the happiest creatures on earth in each other's friendship, till this friend of yours’—And there she stopt, and turned from me.

Where thou callest thyself *A villainous plotter*; ‘ To take crime to himself, said she, without shame, O what a hardened wretch is this man! ’

On that passage, where thou sayest, *Let me know how she has been treated: If roughly, woe be to the guilty!* this was her remark, with an air of indignation: ‘ What a man is your friend, Sir!—Is such a one as *be* to set himself up to punish the guilty?—All the rough usage I could receive from them, was infinitely less’—And there she stopt, a moment or two: Then proceeding—‘ And who shall punish *him*? What an assuming wretch!—No-body but *himself* is intitled to injure the innocent?—He is, I suppose, on earth, to act the part, which the malignant fiend is supposed to act below: Dealing out punishments, at his pleasure, to every inferior instrument of mischief!’

What, thought I, have I been doing ! I shall have this savage fellow think I have been playing him booty, in reading part of his letter to this sagacious lady !— Yet, if thou art angry, it can only, in reason, be at thyself; for who would think I might not communicate to her some of the least exceptionable parts of a letter (as a proof of thy sincerity in exculpating thyself from a criminal charge), which thou wrotest to thy friend, to convince *him* of thy innocence ? But a bad heart, and a bad cause, are confounding things : And so let us put it to its proper account.

I passed over thy charge to me, to curse them by the hour ; and thy names of *Dragon* and *Serpents*, tho' so applicable ; since, had I read them, thou must have been supposed to know from the first, what creatures they were; vile fellow as thou wert, for bringing so much purity among them ! And I closed with thy own concluding paragraph, *A line ! A line ! A kingdom for a line ! &c.* However telling her, since she saw, that I omitted some sentences, that there were further vehemences in it ; but as they were better fitted to shew to me the sincerity of the writer, than for so delicate an ear as hers to hear, I chose to pass them over.

You have read enough, said she — He is a wicked, wicked man ! — I see he intended to have me in his power at any rate ; and I have no doubt of what his purposes were, by what his actions have been. You know his vile Tomlinson, I suppose — you know — But what signifies talking ? — Never was there such a premeditately false heart in man [*Nothing can be truer, thought I !*] : What has he not vowed ! What has he not invented ! And all for what ? — Only, to ruin a poor young creature, whom he ought to have protected ; and whom he had first deprived of all other protection ?

She arose, and turned from me, her handkerchief at her eyes : And, after a pause, came towards me again —

- I hope, said she, I talk to a man, who has a better
- heart : And I thank you, Sir, for all your kind, tho'
- ineffectual, pleas in my favour formerly, whether the
- motives for them were compassion, or principle, or both.
- That they *were* ineffectual, might very probably be
- owing to your want of earnestness ; and *that*, as you
- might

' might think, to my want of merit. I might not, in your eye, deserve to be saved!—I might appear to you a giddy creature, who had run away from her true and natural friends; and who therefore ought to take the consequence of the lot she had drawn.'

I was afraid, for thy sake, to let her know how *very* earnest I had been: But assured her, that I had been her zealous friend; and that my motives were founded upon a merit, that, I believed, was never equalled: That, however indefensible Mr. Lovelace was, he had always done justice to her virtue: That to a full conviction of her untainted honour it was owing, that he so earnestly desired to call so inestimable a jewel his—And was proceeding, when she again cut me short—

Enough, and too much, of this subject, Sir!—If he will never more let me behold his face, that is all I have now to ask of him.—Indeed, indeed, clasping her hands, *I never will*, if I can, by any means not criminally desperate, avoid it.

What could I say for thee?—There was no room, however, *at that time*, to touch this string again, for fear of bringing upon myself a prohibition, not only of the subject, but of ever attending her again.

I gave some distant intimations of money-matters. I should have told thee, that, when I read to her that passage, where thou biddest me force what sums upon her I can get her to take—she repeated, No, no, no, no! several times with great quickness; and I durst no more than just intimate it again—and that so darkly, as left her room to seem not to understand me.

Indeed I know not the person, man or woman, I should be so much afraid of disobliging, or incurring a censure from, as from her. She has so much true dignity in her manner, without pride or arrogance; which, in those who have either, one is tempted to mortify; such a piercing eye, yet softened so sweetly with rays of benignity, that she commands all one's reverence.

Methinks I have a kind of holy love for this angel of a woman; and it is matter of astonishment to me, that thou couldst converse with her a quarter of an hour together, and hold thy devilish purposes.

Guarded

Guarded as she was by piety, prudence, virtue, dignity, family, fortune, and a purity of heart, that never woman before her boasted, what a true devil must he be (yet I doubt I shall make thee proud!), who could resolve to break thro' so many fences!

For my own part, I am more and more sensible, that I ought not to have contented myself with representing *against*, and *expostulating with thee upon*, thy base intentions: And indeed I had it in my head, more than once, to try to do something for her. But, wretch that I was! I was with-held by notions of false honour, as she justly reproached me, because of thy own voluntary communications to me of thy purposes: And then, as she was brought into such a cursed house, and was so watched by thyself, as well as by thy infernal agents, I thought (knowing my man!), that I should only accelerate the intended mischiefs.—Moreover, finding thee so much overawed by her virtue, that thou hadst not, at thy *first* carrying her thither, the courage to attempt her; and that she had, more than once, without knowing thy base views, obliged thee to abandon them, and to resolve to do her justice, and thyself honour; I hardly doubted, that her merit would be triumphant at last.

It is my opinion (if thou holdest thy purposes to marry), that thou canst not do better, than to procure thy real aunts, and thy real cousins, to pay her a visit, and to be thy advocates: But, if they decline personal visits, letters from them, and from my Lord M. supported by Miss Howe's interest, may, perhaps, effect something in thy favour.

But these are only my hopes, founded on what I *wish* for thy sake. The lady, I really think, would choose death rather than thee: And the two women are of opinion, tho' they know not half of what she has suffered, that her heart is actually broken.

At taking my leave, I tendered my best services to her, and besought her to permit me frequently to inquire after her health.

She made me no answer, but by bowing her head.

LET.

LETTER XLVII.

Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

Wednesday, July 19.

THIS morning I took chair to Smith's; and, being told, that the lady had a very bad night, but was up, I sent for her worthy apothecary; who, on his coming to me, approving of my proposal of calling in Dr. H. I bid the women acquaint her with the designed visit.

It seems, she was at first displeased; yet withdrew her objection: But, after a pause, asked them, What she should do? She had effects of value, some of which she intended, as soon as she could, to turn into money; but, till then, had not a single guinea to give the Doctor for his fee.

Mrs. Lovick said, she had five guineas by her: They were at her service.

She would accept of three, she said, if she would take that (pulling a diamond ring from her finger), till she repaid her; but on no other terms.

Having been told, I was below with Mr. Goddard, she desired to speak one word with me, before she saw the Doctor.

She was sitting in an elbow-chair, leaning her head on a pillow; Mrs. Smith and the widow on each side her chair; her nurse, with a phial of hartshorn, behind her; in her own hand, her salts.

Raising her head at my entrance, she inquired, If the Doctor knew Mr. Lovelace?

I told her, No; and that I believed you never saw him in your life.

Was the Doctor my friend?

He was; and a very worthy and skilful man. I named him for his eminence in his profession: And Mr. Goddard said, he knew not a better physician.

I have but one condition to make before I see the gentleman; that he refuse not his fees from me. If I am poor, Sir, I am proud. I will not be under obligation. You may believe, Sir, I will not. I suffer this visit, because I would not appear ingrateful to the few friends I have left, nor obstinate to such of my relations,

as

as may some time hence, for their private satisfaction, inquire after my behaviour in my sick hours. So, Sir, you know the condition. And don't let me be vexed: I am very ill; and cannot debate the matter.

Seeing her so determined, I told her, If it must be so, it should.

Then, Sir, the gentleman may come. But I shall not be able to answer many questions. Nurse, you can tell him, at the window there, what a night I have had, and how I have been for two days past. And Mr. Goddard, if he be here, can let him know what I have taken. Pray let me be as little questioned, as possible.

The Doctor paid his respects to her, with the gentlemanly address for which he is noted: And she cast up her sweet eyes to him, with that benignity which accompanies her every graceful look.

I would have retired; but she forbid it.

He took her hand, the lily not of so beautiful a white; Indeed, Madam, you are very low, said he: But, give me leave to say, That you can do more for yourself, than all the faculty can do for you.

He then withdrew to the window. And, after a short conference with the women, he turned to me, and to Mr. Goddard, at the other window: We can do nothing here, speaking low, but by cordials, and nourishment. What friends has the lady? She seems to be a person of condition; and, ill as she is, a very fine woman.—A single lady, I presume?

I whisperingly told him she was. That there were extraordinary circumstances in her case; as I would have apprised him, had I met with him yesterday. That her friends were very cruel to her; but that she could not hear them named, without reproaching herself; tho' they were much more to blame, than she.

I knew I was right, said the Doctor. A love-case, Mr. Goddard! A love-case, Mr. Belford! There is one person in the world, who can do her more service, than all the faculty.

Mr. Goddard said, he had apprehended her disorder was in her mind; and had treated her accordingly: And then told the Doctor what he had done: Which he approving

of,

of, again taking her charming hand, said, My good young Lady, you will require very little of our assistance. You must, in a great measure, be your own doctress. Come, dear Madam (Forgive me the familiar tenderness; your aspect commands love, as well as reverence; and a father of children, some of them older than yourself, may be excused for them), cheer up your spirits. Resolve to do all in your power to be well; and you'll soon grow better.

You are very kind, Sir, said she. I will take whatever you direct. My spirits have been hurried. I shall be better, I believe, before I am worse. The care of my good friends here, looking at the women, shall not meet with an ingrateful return.

The Doctor wrote. He would fain have declined his fee. As her malady, he said, was rather to be relieved by the soothings of a friend, than by the prescriptions of a physician, he should think himself greatly honoured to be admitted rather to advise her in the one character, than to prescribe to her in the other.

She answered, That she should be always glad to see so humane a gentleman: That his visits would keep her in charity with his sex: But that, were she to forget that he was her physician, she might be apt to abate of the confidence in his skill, which might be necessary to effect the amendment that was the end of his visits.

And when he urged her still further, which he did in a very polite manner, and as passing by the door two or three times a day, she said, she should always have pleasure in considering him in the kind light he offered himself to her: That that might be very generous in one person to offer, which would be as ungenerous in another to accept: That indeed she was not at present high in circumstance; and he saw by the tender (which he must accept of), that she had greater respect to her own convenience, than to his merit, or than to the pleasure she should take in his visits.

We all withdrew together; and the Doctor and Mr. Goddard having a great curiosity to know something more of her story, at the motion of the latter we went into a neighbouring coffee-house, and I gave them, in confidence, a brief relation of it; making all as light for you as I could; and yet you'll suppose, that, in order to do but common

common justice to the lady's character, heavy must be that light.

*Three o'clock, afternoon.*

I just now called again at Smith's ; and am told she is somewhat better ; which she attributed to the foothings of her Doctor. She expressed herself highly pleased with both gentlemen ; and said, that their behaviour to her was perfectly *paternal*.—

*Paternal*, poor lady ! — Never having been, till very lately, from under her parents wings, and now abandon'd by all her friends, she is for finding out something *paternal* and *maternal* in every one (the latter qualities in Mrs. Lovick and Mrs. Smith), to supply to herself the father and mother her dutiful heart pants after !

Mrs. Smith told me, that, after we were gone, she gave the keys of her trunks and drawers to her and the widow Lovick, and desired them to take an inventory of them ; which they did, in her presence.

They also informed me, That she had requested them to find her a purchaser for two rich dress'd suits ; one never worn, the other not above once or twice.

This shock'd me exceedingly : *Perhaps it may be a little !!!* — Her reason for so doing, she told them, was, That she should never live to wear them : That her sister, and other relations, were above wearing them : That her mother would not endure in her sight any-thing that was hers : That she wanted the money : That she would not be obliged to any-body, when she had effects by her, which she had no occasion for : And yet, said she, I expect not, that they will fetch a price answerable to their value.

They were both very much concerned, as they own'd ; and asked my advice upon it : And the richness of her apparel having given them a still higher notion of her rank, than they had before, they suppos'd she must be of quality ; and again wanted to know her story.

I told them, That she was indeed a lady of family and fortune : I still gave them room to suppose her married : But left it to her to tell them all in her own time and manner : All I would say, was, That she had been very vilely treated ; deserved it not ; and was all innocence and purity.

You may suppose, that they both expressed their astonishment, that there could be a man in the world, who could ill-treat so fine a creature.

As to disposing of the two suits of apparel, I told Mrs. Smith, That she should pretend, that, upon inquiry, she had found a friend, who would purchase the richest of them; but (*that she might not mistrust*) would stand upon a good bargain. And having twenty guineas about me, I left them with her, in part of payment; and bid her pretend to get her to part with it for as little more as she could induce her to take.

I am setting out for Edgware with poor Belton—More of whom in my next. I shall return to-morrow; and leave This in readiness for your messenger, if he shall call in my absence. Adieu !

## LETTER XLVIII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

[*In Answer to Letter xlvi.*]

M. Hall, Wedn. night, July 19.

THOU mightst well apprehend, that I should think thou wert playing me booty, in communicating my letter to the lady.

Thou askest, Who would think thou mightst not read to her the least exceptionable parts of a letter written in my own defence to thee?—*I'll tell thee who*—The man, who, in the same letter that he asks this question, tells the friend whom he exposes to her resentment, “That “there is such an air of levity runs thro’ his most serious “letters, that those of his are *least fit to be seen*, which “ought to be *most to his credit*:” And now, what thinkest thou of thy self-condemned folly? Be, however, I charge thee, more circumspect for the future, that so this clumsy error may stand singly by itself.

“It is painful to her to think of me!” “Libertine “froth!” “So pernicious and so despicable a plotter!” “A man whose friendship is no credit to any-body!” “Harden’d wretch!” “The devil’s counterpart!” “A “wicked, wicked man!” — But did she, could she, dared she, to say or *imply* all this?—And say it to a man whom she praises

praises for humanity, and prefers to myself for that virtue; when all the humanity *he* shews, and *she* knows it too, is by my direction—So robs me of the credit of my own works? Admirably intitled, all this shews her, to thy refinement upon the words *resentment* and *revenge*. But thou wert always aiming and blundering at something thou never couldst make out.

The praise thou givest to her *ingenuousness*, is another of thy peculiars. I think not as *thou* dost, of her tell-tale recapitulations and exclamations:—What end can they answer?—Only that thou hast an *holy* love [The devil fetch thee for thy oddity!], or it is extremely provoking to suppose one sees such a charming creature stand upright before a libertine, and talk of the sin against her, that cannot be forgiven!—I wish at my heart, that these chaste ladies would have a little modesty in their anger!—It would sound very strange, if I Robert Lovelace should pretend to have more true delicacy, in a point that requires the utmost, than Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

I think I will put it into the head of her Nurse Norton, and her Miss Howe, by some one of my agents, to chide the dear novice for her proclamations.

But to be serious; Let me tell thee, that severe as she is, and saucy, in asking so contemptuously, “ What a man is your friend, Sir, to set himself to punish guilty people!” I will never forgive the cursed woman, who could commit this last horrid violence on so excellent a creature.

The barbarous insults of the two nymphs, in their visits to her; the choice of the most execrable den that could be found out, in order, no doubt, to induce her to go back to theirs; and the still more execrable attempt, to propose to her a man who would pay the debt; a snare, I make no question, laid for her despairing and resenting heart by that devilish Sally (thinking her, no doubt, a *woman*), in order to ruin her with me; and to provoke me, in a fury, to give her up to their remorseless cruelty; are outrages, that, to express myself in her style, I never *can*, never *will*, forgive.

But as to thy opinion, and the two womens at Smith's, that her heart is broken; that is the true womens language:

guage: I wonder how *thou* camest into it: Thou who hast seen and heard of so many *female deaths* and *revivals*.

I'll tell thee what makes *against* this notion of theirs.

Her time of life, and charming constitution: The good she ever delighted to do, and fancied she was born to do: And which she may still continue to do, to as high a degree as ever; nay, higher; since I am no sordid varlet, thou knowest: Her religious turn; a turn that will always teach her to bear *inevitable evils* with patience: The contemplation upon her last noble triumph over me, and over the whole crew; and upon her succeeding escape from us all: Her will unviolated: And the inward pride of having not deserved the treatment she has met with.

How is it possible to imagine, that a woman, who has all these *consolatories* to reflect upon, will die of a broken heart?

On the contrary, I make no doubt, but that, as she recovers from the dejection into which this last scurvy villainy (which none but wretches of her own sex could have been guilty of), has thrown her, returning Love will re-enter her time-pacified mind: Her thoughts will then turn once more on the conjugal pivot: Of course she will have livelier notions in her head; and these will make her perform all her circumvolutions with ease and pleasure; tho' not with so high a degree of either, as if the dear proud rogue could have exalted herself above the rest of her sex, as she turned round.

Thou askest, on reciting the bitter invectives that the lady made against thy poor friend (standing before her, I suppose, with thy fingers in thy mouth), *What couldst thou say F O R me?*

Have I not, in my former letters, suggested an hundred things, which a friend, *in earnest* to vindicate or excuse a friend, might say, on such an occasion?

But now to current topics, and the present state of matters here — It is true, as my servant told thee, that Miss Howe had engaged, before this cursed woman's officiousness, to use her interest with her friend in my behalf: And yet she told my cousins, in the visit they made her, that it was her opinion, that she would never forgive me.

I long

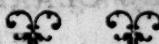
I long to know what Miss Howe wrote to her friend, in order to induce her to marry the *despicable plotter*; the *man whose friendship is no credit to any-body*; the *wicked, wicked man*. Thou hadst the two letters in thy hand. Had they been in mine, the seal would have yielded to the touch of my warm finger [Perhaps without the help of the post-office bullet], and the folds, as other plications have done, open'd of themselves, to oblige my curiosity. A wicked omission, Jack, not to contrive to send them down to me, by man and horse! It might have passed, that the messenger, who brought the second letter, took them both back. I could have returned them by another, when copied, as from Miss Howe, and no-body but myself and thee the wiser.

My two aunts, finding the treaty, upon the success of which they have set their foolish hearts, likely to run into length, are about departing to their own seats; having taken from me the best security the nature of the case will admit of, that is to say, *my word*, to marry the lady, if she will have me.

All I have to do, in my present uncertainty, is, to brighten up my faculties, by filing off the rust they have contracted by the town smoke, a long imprisonment in my close attendance to so little purpose on my fair perverse; and to brace up, if I can, the relaxed fibres of my mind, which have been twitch'd and convuls'd like the nerves of some tottering paralytic, by means of the tumults she has excited in it; that so I may be able to present to her a husband as worthy as I can be of her acceptance; or, if she reject me, be in a capacity to resume my usual gaiety of heart, and shew others of the misleading sex, that I am not discouraged by the difficulties I have met with from this sweet individual of it, from endeavouring to make myself as acceptable to them as before.

In this latter case, one tour to France and Italy, I dare say, will do the busnels. Miss Harlowe will by that time have forgotten all she has suffered from the ingrateful Lovelace: Tho' it will be impossible that her Lovelace should ever forget a woman, whose equal he despairs to meet with, were he to travel from one end of the world to the other.

If thou continuest paying off the heavy debts my long letters, for so many weeks together, have made thee groan under, I will endeavour to restrain myself in the desires I have (importunate as they are) of going to town, to throw myself at the feet of my soul's beloved. *Policy*, and *honesty*, both join to strengthen the restraint my own promise and thy engagement have laid me under on this head. I would not afresh provoke: On the contrary, would give time for her resentments to subside, that so all that follows may be her own act and deed.



HICKMAN [I have a mortal aversion to that fellow!] has, by a line which I have just now received, requested an interview with me on Friday at Mr. Dormer's, as at a *common friend's*. Does the business he wants to meet me upon, require that it should be at a *common friend's*?—A challenge implied; i'nt it, Belford?—I shall not be civil to him, I doubt. He has been an intermeddler!—Then I envy him on Miss Howe's account: For if I have a right notion of this Hickman, it is impossible that that virago can ever love him.

A charming encouragement for a man of intrigue, when he has reason to believe, that the woman he has a view upon has no love for her husband! What good principles must that wife have, who is kept in against temptation by a sense of her duty, and plighted faith, where affection has no hold of her!

Prythee let's know, very particularly, how it fares with poor Belton.—'Tis an honest fellow.—Something more than his Thomasine seems to stick with him.

Tourville, Mowbray, and myself, pass away our time as pleasantly as possibly we can without thee. I wish we don't add to Lord M.'s gouty days by the joy we give him.

This is one advantage, as I believe I have elsewhere observed, that we male-delinquents in love-matters have of the other sex:—For while they, poor things! sit sighing in holes and corners, or run to woods and groves to bemoan themselves for their baffled hopes, we can rant and roar, hunt and hawk; and, by new loves, banish from our hearts all remembrance of the old ones.

Merrily,

Merrily, however, as we pass our time, my reflections upon the injuries done to this noble creature bring a qualm upon my heart very often. But I know she will permit me to make her amends, after she has plagued me heartily ; and that's my consolation.

An honest fellow still ! — Clap thy wings, and crow, Jack ! —

### LETTER XLIX.

*Miss Howe, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.*

Thursday morn. July 20.

**W**HAT, my dearest creature, have been your sufferings ! — What must have been your anguish on so disgraceful an insult, committed in the open streets, and in the open day !

No end, I think, of the undeserved calamities of a dear soul, who has been so unhappily driven and betrayed into the hands of a vile libertine ! — How was I shocked at the receiving of your letter written by another hand; and only dictated by you ! — You must be very ill. Nor is it to be wondered at. But I hope it is rather from hurry, and surprize, and lowness, which *may* be overcome, than from a grief given way to, which may be attended with effects I cannot bear to think of.

— But whatever you do, my dear, you must not despond ! Indeed you must not despond ! Hitherto you have been in no fault : But despair would be all your own ; and the worst fault you can be guilty of.

I cannot bear to look upon another hand instead of yours. My dear creature, send me a few lines, tho' *ever so few*, in your own hand, if possible.—For they will revive my heart ; especially if they can acquaint me of your amended health.

I expect your answer to my letter of the 13th. We all expect it with impatience.

His relations are persons of *so much* honour—They are so *very* earnest to rank you among them—The wretch is so *very* penitent : Every one of his family says he is — Your own are so implacable—Your last distresses, tho' the consequence of his former villainy, yet neither brought on by

his direction, nor with his knowlege; and so much resented by him—That my mamma is absolutely of opinion, that *you should be his*—Especially if, yielding to my wishes, as in my letter, and those of all his friends, *you would have complied*, had it not been for this horrid arrest.

I will inclose the copy of the letter I wrote to Miss Montague last Tuesday, on hearing that no-body knew what was become of you; and the answer to it, underwritten and signed by Lord M. and Lady Sarah Sadleir, and Lady Betty Lawrance, as well as by the young ladies—And also by the wretch himself.

I own, that I like not the turn of what he has written to me; and before I will further interest myself in his favour, I have determined to inform myself, by a friend, from his own mouth, of his sincerity, and whether his *whole inclination* be in his request to me, exclusive of the *wishes of his relations*. Yet my heart rises against him, on the supposition that there is the shadow of a reason for such a question, the lady Miss Clarissa Harlowe.—But, I think, with my mother, that marriage is now the only means left to make your future life tolerably easy—*happy* there is no saying.—In the eye of the world itself, his disgraces, in *that case*, will be more than yours.—And to those who know you, glorious will be your triumph.

I am obliged to accompany my mother soon to the Isle of Wight. My aunt Harman is in a declining way, and insists upon seeing us both; and Mr. Hickman too, I think.

His sister, of whom we had heard so much, with her Lord, were brought t'other day to visit us. She strangely likes me, or says she does.

I can't say, but that I think she answers the excellent character we have heard of her.

It would be death to me to set out for the little island, and not see you first: And yet my mother (fond of exerting an authority, that she herself, by that exertion, often brings into question) insists, that my next visit to you must be a congratulatory one, as Mrs. Lovelace.

When I know what will be the result of the questions to be put in my name to that wretch, and what is your mind on my letter of the 13th, I shall tell you more of mine.

The bearer promises to make so much dispatch, as to attend you this very afternoon. May he return with good tidings to

*Your ever-affectionate*

ANNA HOWE.

## LETTER L.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss Howe.*

*Thursday afternoon.*

**Y**OU oppress me, my dearest Miss Howe, by your flaming, yet steady love. I will be very brief, because I am not well; yet a good deal better than I was; and because I am preparing an answer to yours of the 13th. But, beforehand, I must tell you, my dear, I will not have that man — Don't be angry with me. — But indeed I won't. So let him be asked no questions about me, I beseech you.

I do not despond, my dear. I hope I may say, *I will* not despond. Is not my condition greatly mended? I thank Heaven it is!

I am no prisoner now in a vile house. I am not now in the power of that man's devices. I am not now obliged to hide myself in corners for fear of him. One of his intimate companions is become my warm friend, and engages to keep him from me, and that by his own consent. I am among honest people. I have all my cloaths and effects restored me. The wretch himself bears testimony to my honour.

Indeed I am very weak and ill: But I have an excellent physician, Dr. H. and as worthy an apothecary, Mr. Goddard. — Their treatment of me, my dear, is perfectly *paternal!* — My mind too, I can find, begins to strengthen: And methinks, at times, I find myself superior to my calamities.

I shall have sinkings sometimes. I must expect such. And my father's maledict----- But you will chide me for introducing that, now I am enumerating my comforts.

But I charge you, my dear, that you do not suffer my calamities to sit too heavy upon your own mind: If you do, that will be to new-point some of those arrows, that have been blunted, and lost their sharpness.

If

If you would contribute to my happiness, give way, my dear, to your own; and to the cheerful prospects before you!

You will think very meanly of your Clarissa Harlowe, if you do not believe, that the greatest pleasure she can receive in this life, is in your prosperity and welfare. Think not of me, my only friend, but as we were in times past: And suppose me gone a great, great way off!—A long journey!—How often are the dearest of friends, at their country's call, thus parted,---with a *certainty* for years---with a *probability* for ever!

Love me still, however. But let it be with a weaning love. I am not what I was, when we were *insparable* lovers, as I may say.---Our *views* must now be different.---Resolve, my dear, to make a worthy man happy, because a worthy man must make you so.---And so, my dearest love, for the present adieu!---Adieu, my dearest love!---But I shall soon write again, I hope!

## LETTER LI.

Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

[*In Answer to Letter xlviij.*]

Thursday, July 20.

I Read that part of your conclusion to poor Belton, where you inquire after him, and mention how merrily you, and the rest, pass your time at M. Hall. He fetched a deep sigh; *You are all very happy!* were his words: ---I am sorry they were his words; for, poor fellow, he is going very fast. Change of air, he hopes, will mend him, joined to the cheerful company I have left him in. But nothing, I dare say, will.

A consuming malady, and a consuming mistress, to an indulgent keeper, are dreadful things to struggle with both together: Violence must be used to get rid of the latter: and yet he has not spirit left him, to exert himself. His house is Thomasine's house; not his. He has not been within his doors for a fortnight past. Vagabonding about from inn to inn; entering each for a bait only; and staying two or three days without power to remove; and hardly knowing which to go to next. His malady is within him; and he cannot run away from it.

Her boys (once he thought them his) are sturdy enough to shoulder him in his own house as they pass by him. Siding with the mother, they in a manner expel him; and, in his absence, riot away on the remnant of his broken fortunes. As to their mother, who was once so tender, so submissive, so studious to oblige, that we all pronounced him happy, and his course of life the eligible, she is now so termagant, so insolent, that he cannot contend with her, without doing infinite prejudice to his health. A broken-spirited defensive, *hardly a defensive*, therefore reduced to : And this to a heart, for so many years waging *offensive* war (nor valuing whom the opponent), what a reduction !—Now comparing himself to the superannuated lion in the fable, kick'd in the jaws, and laid sprawling, by the spurning heel of an ignoble ass !

I have undertaken his cause. He has given me leave, yet not without reluctance, to put him into possession of his own house ; and to place in it for him his unhappy sister, whom he has hitherto slighted, *because unhappy*. It is hard, he told me (and wept, poor fellow, when he said it), that he cannot be permitted to die quietly in his own house !---The fruits of blessed keeping these ! —

Tho' but lately apprised of her infidelity, it now comes out to have been of so long continuance, that he has no room to believe the boys to be his : Yet how fond did he use to be of them !

If I have occasion for your assistance, and that of our compeers, in reinstating the poor fellow, I will give you notice. Mean time, I have just now been told, that Thomasine declares she will not stir : For, it seems, she suspects that measures will be fallen upon to make her quit. She is Mrs. Belton, she says, and will prove her marriage.

If she give herself these airs in his life-time, what would she attempt to do after his death ?

Her boys threaten any-body, who shall presume to insult their mother. Their *father* (as they call poor Belton) they speak of as an unnatural one. And their probably *true father* is for ever there, hostilely there, passing for her cousin, as usual : Now her *protecting cousin*.

Hardly ever, I dare say, was there a keeper, that did not make a keeperess ; who lavish'd away on her kept-fellow,

fellow, what she obtained from the extravagant folly of him who kept her.

I will do without you, if I can. The case will be only, as I conceive, like that of the antient Sarmatians, returning, after many years absence, to their homes, their wives then in possession of their slaves : So that they had to contend not only with those *wives*, conscious of their infidelity, and with their *slaves*, but with the *children* of those slaves, grown up to manhood, resolute to defend their mothers, and their long manumitted fathers. But the noble Sarmatians, scorning to attack their slaves with equal weapons, only provided themselves with the same sort of whips, with which they used formerly to chastise them. And, attacking them with them, the miscreants fled before them.---In memory of which, to this day, the device on the coin in Novogrod in Russia, a city of the antient Sarmatia, is a man on horseback, with a whip in his hand.

The poor fellow takes it ill, that you did not press him more than you did, to be of your party at M. Hall. It is owing to Mowbray, he is sure, that he had so very slight an invitation, from one whose invitations used to be so warm.

Mowbray's speech to him, he says, he never will forgive : " Why, Tom," said the brutal fellow, with a curse, " thou droopest like a pip or roup-cloaking chicken. " Thou shouldest grow perter, or submit to a solitary quarantine, if thou wouldest not infect the whole brood."

For my own part, only that this poor fellow is in distress, as well in his affairs, as in his mind, or I should be sick of you all. Such is the relish I have of the conversation, and such my admiration of the deportment and sentiments of this divine lady, that I would forego a month, even of thy company, to be admitted into hers but for one hour : And I am highly in conceit with myself, greatly as I used to value *thine*, for being able, spontaneously, as I may say, to make this preference.

It is, after all, a devilish life we have lived. And to consider how it all ends in a very few years : To see what a state of ill health this poor fellow is so soon reduced to : And then to observe how every one of ye run away from

the unhappy being, as rats from a falling house, is fine comfort to help a man to look back upon companions ill-chosen, and a life mis-spent !

For my own part, if I can get some good family to credit me with a sister or a daughter, as I have now an increased fortune, which will enable me to propose handsome settlements, I will desert ye all ; marry, and live a life of reason, rather than a life of brute, for the time to come.

### LETTER LII.

*Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;*

*Thursday night.*

I Was forced to take back my twenty guineas. How the women managed it, I can't tell (I suppose too readily found a purchaser for the rich suit) ; but she mistrusted, that I was the advancer of the money ; and would not let the cloaths go. But Mrs. Lovick has actually sold, for fifteen guineas, some rich lace, worth three times the sum : Out of which she repaid her the money she borrowed for fees to the doctor, in an illness occasioned by the barbarity of the most savage of men. *Thou knowest his name !*

The Doctor called on her in the morning, it seems, and Had a short debate with her about fees. She insisted, that he should take one every time he came, write or not write ; mistrusting, that he only gave verbal directions to Mrs. Lovick, or the nurse, to avoid taking any.

He said, That it would have been impossible for him, had he *not* been a physician, to forbear inquiries after the health and welfare of so excellent a person. He had not the thought of paying her a compliment in declining the offer'd fee : But he knew her case could not so suddenly vary, as to demand his daily visits. She must permit him, therefore, to inquire after her health of the women below ; and he must not think of coming up, if he were to be pecuniarily rewarded for the satisfaction he was so desirous to give himself.

It ended in a compromise for a fee each other time : Which she unwillingly submitted to ; telling him, that tho' she was at present desolate and in disgrace, yet her circumstances

cumstances were, of right, high; and no expences could rise so, as to be scrupled, whether she lived or died. But she submitted, she added, to the compromise, in hopes to see him as often as he had opportunity; for she really looked upon him, and Mr. Goddard, from their kind and tender treatment of her, with a regard next to filial.

I hope thou wilt make thyself acquainted with this worthy doctor, when thou comest to town; and give him thy thanks, for putting her into conceit with the Sex that thou hast given her so much reason to execrate.

*Farewel.*

### LETTER LIII.

*Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;*

*M. Hall, Friday, July 21.*

JUST returned from an interview with this Hickman: A precise fop of a fellow, as starch'd as his ruffles.

Thou knowest I love him not, Jack; and whom we love not, we cannot allow a merit to; perhaps not the merit they should be granted.—However, I am in earnest when I say, that he seems to me to be so set, so prim, so affected, so mincing, yet so clouterly in his person, that I dare engage for thy opinion, if thou dost justice to him, and to thyself, that thou never beheldest such another, except in a pier-glaſs.

I'll tell thee how I play'd him off.

He came in his own chariot to Dormer's; and we took a turn in the garden, at his request. He was devilish ceremonious, and made a bushel of apologies for the freedom he was going to take; and, after half a hundred hums and haws, told me, that he came—that he came—to wait on me—at the request of *dear Miss Howe*, on the account—on the account—of *Miss Harlowe*:

Well, Sir, speak on, said I: But give me leave to say, that if your book be as long as your preface, it will take up a week to read it.

This was pretty rough, thou'l't say: But there's nothing like balking these formalists at first. When they're put out of their road, they are filled with doubts of themselves, and can never get into it again: So that an

honest fellow, impertinently attacked, as I was, has all the game in his own hand, quite thro' the conference.

He stroak'd his chin, and hardly knew what to say. At last, after parenthesis within parenthesis, apologizing for apologies, in imitation, I suppose, of Swift's Digrressions in Praise of Digressions,---I presume, I presume, Sir, you were privy to the visit made to Miss Howe by the young ladies your cousins, in the name of Lord M. and Lady Sarah Sadleir, and Lady Betty Lawrance ?

I was, Sir : And Miss Howe had a letter afterwards, signed by his Lordship and those Ladies, and underwritten by myself. Have you seen it, Sir ?

I can't say but I have. It is the principal cause of this visit : For Miss Howe thinks your part of it is written with such an air of levity---Pardon me, Sir,---that she knows not whether you are in earnest, or not, in your address to her for her interest to her friend (a).

Will Miss Howe permit me to explain myself in person to her, Mr. Hickman ?

O Sir, by no means : Miss Howe, I am sure, would not give you that trouble.

I should not think it a trouble. I will most readily attend you, Sir, to Miss Howe, and satisfy her in all her scruples. Come, Sir, I will wait upon you now. You have a chariot. Are alone. We can talk as we ride.

He hesitated, wriggled, winced, stroaked his ruffles, set his wig, and pulled his neckcloth, which was long enough for a bib---I am not going directly back to Miss Howe, Sir. It will be as well, if you will be so good as to satisfy Miss Howe by me.

What is it she scruples, Mr. Hickman ?

Why, Sir, Miss Howe observes, that in your part of the letter, you say---But let me see, Sir : I have a copy of what you wrote---Pulling it out---Will you give me leave, Sir ?---Thus you begin---*Dear Miss Howe* ---

No offence, I hope, Mr. Hickman ?

None in the least, Sir !---None at all, Sir !---Taking aim, as it were to read:

Do you use spectacles, Mr. Hickman ?

*Spectacles*, Sir ! His whole broad face lifted up at me :

*Spectacles* !

(a) See p. 135. of this Volume.

Miss Clariſſa Harlowe. 201

Spectacles!—What makes you ask me such a question?—Such a young man as I use spectacles, Sir!—

They do in Spain, Mr. Hickman; young as well as old; to save their eyes.----Have you ever read Prior's *Alma*, Mr. Hickman?

I have, Sir:—Custom is every-thing in nations, as well as with individuals: I know the meaning of your question,---But 'tis not the *English* custom.—

Was you ever in Spain, Mr. Hickman?

No, Sir! I have been in Holland.

In Holland, Sir!—Never in France or Italy?—I was resolved to travel with him into the land of *Puzzledom*.

No, Sir, I cannot say I have, as yet.

That's a wonder, Sir, when on the continent!

I went on a particular affair: I was obliged to return soon.

Well, Sir; you was going to read—Pray be pleased to proceed.

Again he took aim, as if his eyes were older than the rest of him; and read, *After what is written above, and signed by names and characters of such unquestionable honour*—To be sure, taking off his eye, no-body questions the honour of Lord M. nor that of the good ladies, who signed the letter.

I hope, Mr. Hickman, no-body questions mine neither?

If you please, Sir, I will read on:—*I might have been excused signing a name, almost as hateful to myself [You are pleased to say], as I KNOW it is to You*—

Well, Mr. Hickman, I must interrupt you at this place. In what I wrote to Miss Howe, I distinguish'd the word know. I had a reason for it. Miss Howe has been very free with my character. I have never done her any harm. I take it very ill of her. And I hope, Sir, you come in her name to make excuses for it.

Miss Howe, Sir, is a very polite young lady. She is not accustomed to treat any gentleman's character unbecomingly.

Then *I* have the more reason to take it amiss, Mr. Hickman.

Why, Sir, you know the friendship —

No friendship should warrant such freedoms as Miss Howe has taken with my character.

I believe he began to wish he had not come near me. He seemed quite disconcerted.

Have you not heard Miss Howe treat my name with great —

Sir, I come not to offend or affront you : But you know what a love there is between Miss Howe and Miss Harlowe.---I doubt, Sir, you have not treated Miss Harlowe, as so fine a young lady deserved to be treated : And if love for her friend has made Miss Howe take freedoms, as you call them, a generous mind, on such an occasion, will rather be sorry for having given the *cause*, than —

I know your consequence, Sir ! — But I'd rather have this reproof from a lady, than from a gentleman. I have a great desire to wait upon Miss Howe. I am persuaded we should soon come to a good understanding. Generous minds are always of kin. I know we should agree in every-thing. Pray, Mr. Hickman, be so kind as to introduce me to Miss Howe.

Sir—I can signify your desire, if you please, to Miss Howe.

Do so. Be pleased to read on, Mr. Hickman.

He did very formally, as if I remembered not what I had written ; and when he came to the passage about the halter, the parson, and the hangman, reading it, Why, Sir, says he, does not this look like a jest ?—Miss Howe thinks it does. It is not in the lady's power, you know, Sir, to doom you to the gallows.

Then, if it were, Mr. Hickman, you think she would ?

You say here to Miss Howe, proceeded he, that Miss Harlowe is the *most injured of her sex*. I know from Miss Howe, that she highly resents the injuries you own : Inasmuch that Miss Howe doubts that she shall ever prevail upon her to overlook them : And as your family are all desirous you should repair her wrongs, and likewise desire Miss Howe's interposition with her friend : Miss Howe fears, from this part of your letter, that you are too much in jest ; and that your offer to do her justice, is rather compliment to your friends intreaties, than proceeding from your own inclinations : And she desires to know

your

your true sentiments on this occasion, before she interposes further.

Do you think, Mr. Hickman, that, if I am capable of deceiving my own relations, I have so much obligation to Miss Howe, who has always treated me with great freedom, as to acknowlege to *her*, what I don't to *them*?

Sir, I beg pardon: — But Miss Howe thinks, that, as you have written to her, she may ask you, by me, for an explanation of what you have written.

You see, Mr. Hickman, something of me. — Do you think I am in jest, or in earnest?

I see, Sir, you are a gay gentleman, of fine spirits, and all That — All I beg in Miss Howe's name, is, to know, if you really, and *bona fide*, join with your friends, in desiring her to use her interest to reconcile you to Miss Harlowe?

I should be extremely glad to be reconciled to Miss Harlowe; and should owe great obligations to Miss Howe, if she could bring about so happy an event.

Well, Sir, and you have no objections to marriage, I presume, as the terms of that reconciliation?

I never liked matrimony in my life. I must be plain with you, Mr. Hickman.

I am sorry for it: I think it a very happy state:

I hope you will find it so, Mr. Hickman.

I doubt not but I shall, Sir. And I dare say, so would you, if you were to have Miss Harlowe.

If I could be happy in it with any-body, it would be with Miss Harlowe.

I am surprised, Sir! — Then, after all, you don't think of marrying Miss Harlowe! — After the hard usage —

What hard usage, Mr. Hickman? I don't doubt but a lady of her niceness has represented what would appear trifles to any other, in a very strong light.

If what I have had hinted to me, Sir — Excuse me — has been offered to the lady, she has more than trifles to complain of.

Let me know what you have heard, Mr. Hickman? I will very truly answer to the accusations.

Sir, you know best what you have done: You own the lady is the most injured, as well as the most deserving, of *her sex*.

I do, Sir ; and yet, I would be glad to know what you have heard ; for on that, perhaps, depends my answer to the questions Miss Howe puts to me by you.

Why then, Sir, since you ask it, you cannot be displeased if I answer you :—In the first place, Sir, you will acknowlege, I suppose, that you promised Miss Harlowe Marriage, and all That ?

Well, Sir, and I suppose what you have to charge me with, is, That I was desirous to have *all That*, without marriage.

Cot-so, Sir, I know you are deemed to be a man of wit : But may I not ask, if these things fit not too light upon you ?

When a thing is done, and cannot be helped, 'tis right to make the best of it. I wish the lady would think so too.

I think, Sir, ladies should not be deceived. I think a promise to a lady should be as binding as to any other person, at the least.

I believe you think so, Mr. Hickman : And I believe you are a very honest good sort of a man.

I would always keep my word, Sir, whether to man or woman.

You say well. And far be it from me to persuade you to do otherwise. But what have you farther heard ?

Thou wilt think, Jack, I must be very desirous to know in what light my elected spouse had represented things to Miss Howe ; and how far Miss Howe had communicated them to Mr. Hickman.

Sir, this is no part of my present business.

But, Mr. Hickman, 'tis part of mine. I hope you would not expect, that I should answer *your* questions, at the same time that you refuse to answer *mine*. What, pray, have you farther heard ?

Why then, Sir, if I must say, I am told, that Miss Harlowe was carried to a very bad house.

Why, indeed, the people did not prove so good as they should be.—What farther have you heard ?

I have heard, Sir, that the lady had strange advantages taken of her, very *unfair* ones ; but what I cannot say.

And cannot you say ? Cannot you guess ? Then I'll tell you, Sir. Perhaps some liberty was taken with her,

when she was asleep. Do you think no lady ever was taken at such an advantage?—You know, Mr. Hickman, that ladies are very shy of trusting themselves with the modestest of our sex, when they are disposed to sleep; and why so, if they did not *expect*, that advantages would be taken of them at such times?

But, Sir, had not the lady something given her to make her sleep?

Ay, Mr. Hickman, that's the question: I want to know if the lady says she had?

I have not seen all she has written; but by what I have heard, it is a very black affair—Excuse me, Sir.

I do excuse you, Mr. Hickman: But, supposing it were so, do you think a lady was never imposed upon by wine, or so?—Do you think the most cautious woman in the world might not be cheated by a stronger liquor, for a smaller, when she was thirsty, after a fatigue in this very warm weather? And do you think, if she was thus thrown into a profound sleep, that she is the only lady that was ever taken at such advantage?

Even as you make it, Mr. Lovelace, this matter is not a light one. But I fear it is a great deal heavier than as you put it.

What reasons have you to fear this, Sir? What has the lady said? Pray, let me know. I have *reason* to be so earnest.

Why, Sir, Miss Howe herself knows not the whole. The lady promises to give her all the particulars, at a proper time, if she lives; but has said enough to make it out to be a very bad affair.

I am glad Miss Harlowe has not yet given all the particulars. And, since she has not, you may tell Miss Howe from me, That neither she, nor any lady in the world, can be more virtuous than Miss Harlowe is to this hour, as to her own mind. Tell her, that I hope she never *will* know the particulars; but that she has been unworthily used: Tell her, that tho' I know not what she has said, yet I have such an opinion of her veracity, that I would blindly subscribe to the truth of every tittle of it, tho' it make me ever so black. Tell her, that I have but *three* things to blame her for: One, That she won't give me an oppor-

opportunity of repairing her wrongs: The Second, That she is so ready to acquaint every-body with what she has suffered, that it will put it out of my power to redress those wrongs, with any tolerable reputation to either of us. Will this, Mr. Hickman, answer any part of the intention of this visit?

Why, Sir, this is talking like a man of honour, I own. But you say there is a *Third* thing you blame the lady for; may I ask what That is?

I don't know, Sir, whether I ought to tell it you, or not. Perhaps you won't believe it, if I do. But tho' the lady will tell the *truth*, and nothing *but* the truth, yet, perhaps, she will not tell the *whole* truth.

Pray, Sir—But it mayn't be proper:— Yet you give me great curiosity: Sure there is no misconduct in the lady. I hope there is not. I am sure, if Miss Howe did not believe her to be faultless in every particular, she would not interest herself so much in her favour as she does, dearly as she loves her.

I love the lady too well, Mr. Hickman, to wish to lessen her in Miss Howe's opinion; especially as she is abandoned of every other friend. But, perhaps, it would hardly be credited, if I should tell you.

I should be very sorry, Sir; and so would Miss Howe, if this poor lady's conduct had laid her under obligation to you for this reserve.— You have so much the appearance of a gentleman, as well as are so much distinguished in your family and fortunes, that I hope you are incapable of loading such a young lady as this, in order to lighten yourself.—Excuse me, Sir.

I do, I do, Mr. Hickman. You say, you came not with any intention to affront me. I take freedom, and I give it.—I should be very loth, I repeat, to say anything that may weaken Miss Harlowe in the good opinion of the only friend she thinks she has left.

It may not be proper, said he, for me to know your *third* article against this unhappy lady: But I never heard of any body, out of her own implacable family, that had the least doubt of her honour. Mrs. Howe, indeed, once said, after a conference with one of her uncles, that she feared all was not right of her side.—But else, I never heard—

Oons,

Oons, Sir, in a fierce tone, and with an erect mien, stopping short upon him, which made him start back—'Tis next to blasphemy to question the lady's honour. She is more pure than a vestal; for vestals have been often warmed by their own fires. No age, from the first to the present, ever produced, nor will the future, to the end of the world, I dare averr, ever produce, a young blooming lady, tried as she has been tried, who has stood all trials, as she has done.—Let me tell you, Sir, That you never saw, never knew, never heard of, such another lady, as Miss Harlowe.

Sir, Sir, I beg your pardon. Far be it from me to question the lady. You have not heard me say a word, that could be so construed. I have the utmost honour for her. Miss Howe loves her, as she loves her own soul; and that she would not do, if she were not sure she were as virtuous as herself.

*As herself, Sir!*—I have a high opinion of Miss Howe, Sir—But, I dare say—

What, Sir, dare you say of Miss Howe?—I hope, Sir, you will not presume to say any-thing to the disparagement of Miss Howe!

*Presume, Mr. Hickman!*—That is *presuming* language, let me tell you, Mr. Hickman!

The *occasion* for it, Mr. Lovelace, if designed, is *presuming*, if you please.—I am not a man ready to take offence, Sir—Especially where I am employed as a mediator. But no man breathing shall say disparaging things of Miss Howe, in my hearing, without observation.

Well said, Mr. Hickman. I dislike not your spirit, on such a *supposed* occasion. But what I was going to say is this, That there is not, in my opinion, a woman in the world, who ought to compare herself with Miss Clarissa Harlowe, till she has stood *her* trials, and has behaved under them, and *after* them, as she has done. You see, Sir, I speak against myself. You see, I do. For, libertine as I am thought to be, I never will attempt to bring down the measures of right and wrong to the standard of my actions.

Why, Sir, this is very right. It is very *noble*, I will say. But 'tis pity—Excuse me, Sir—'tis pity, that the man

man who can pronounce so fine a sentence, will not square his actions accordingly.

That, Mr. Hickman, is another point. We all err in some things. I wish not that Miss Howe should have Miss Harlowe's trials: And I rejoice, that she is in no danger of any such from so good a man.

Poor Hickman!—He looked as if he knew not whether I meant a compliment or a reflection!

But, proceeded I, since I find that I have excited your curiosity, that you may not go away with a doubt that may be injurious to the most admirable of women, I am inclined to hint to you, what I have in the third place to blame her for.

Sir, as you please—It may not be proper—

It cannot be very *improper*, Mr. Hickman—So let me ask you, What would Miss Howe think, if her friend is the *more* determined against me, because she thinks (in revenge to me, I verily believe that!) of encouraging another lover?

How, Sir!—Sure this cannot be the case!—I can tell you, Sir, if Miss Howe thought this, she would not approve of it at all: For, little as you think Miss Howe likes you, Sir, and little as she approves of your actions by her friend, I know she is of opinion, that she ought to have no-body living, but you: And should continue single all her life, if she be not yours.

Revenge and obstinacy, Mr. Hickman, will make women, the best of them, do very unaccountable things.—Rather than not put out both eyes of the man they are offended with, they will give up one of their own.

I don't know what to say to this, Sir: But, sure, she cannot encourage any other person's address! — So soon too—Why, Sir, she is, as we are told, so ill, and so weak—

Not in resentment weak, I'll assure you. I am well acquainted with all her movements—And I tell you, believe it, or not, that she refuses me in view of another lover.

Can it be?

'Tis true, by my soul!—Has she not hinted this to Miss Howe, do you think?

No indeed, Sir. If she had, I should not have troubled you, at this time, from Miss Howe.

Well

Well then, you see I am right: That tho' she cannot be guilty of a falsehood, yet she has not told her friend the whole truth.

What shall a man say to these things! looking most stupidly perplexed.

Say! say, Mr. Hickman! — Who can account for the workings and ways of a passionate and offended lady? Endless would be the histories I could give you, within my own knowlege, of the dreadful effects of womens passionate resentments, and what that Sex will do, when disappointed. But can there be a stronger instance than this, of such a person as Miss Harlowe, who, at this very instant, and ill as she is, not only encourages, but, in a manner, makes court to, one of the most odious dogs that ever was seen? I think Miss Howe should not be told this. And yet she ought too, in order to dissuade her from such a preposterous rashness.

O fie! O strange! Miss Howe knows nothing of this! To be sure she won't look upon her, if this be true!

'Tis true, very true, Mr. Hickman! True as I am here to tell you so! — And he is an ugly fellow too; uglier to look at than me.

Than *you*, Sir! Why, to be sure, you are one of the handsomest men in England.

Well, but the wretch she so spitefully prefers to me is a mishapen, meager varlet; more like a skeleton than a man! Then he dresses—you never saw a devil so bedizened! Hardly a coat to his back, nor a shoe to his foot: A bald-pated villain, yet grudges to buy a peruke to hide his baldness: For he is as covetous as hell, never satisfied, yet plaguy rich.

Why, Sir, there is some joke in this, surely. A man of common parts knows not how to take such gentlemen as you. But, Sir, if there be any truth in the story, what is he? Some Jew, or miserly citizen, I suppose, that may have presumed on the lady's distressful circumstances; and your lively wit points him out as it pleases.

Why the rascal has estates in every county *in* England, and *out of* England too.

Some East-India governor, I suppose, if there be anything in it. The lady once had thoughts of going abroad.

But,

But, I fancy, all this time you are in jest, Sir. If not, we must surely have heard of him—

Heard of him! Ay, Sir, we have all heard of him—But none of us care to be intimate with him—except this lady—and that, as I told you, in spite to me—His name, in short, is DEATH!—DEATH, Sir, stamping, and speaking loud, and full in his ear; which made him jump half a yard high.

Thou never beheldest any man so disconcerted. He looked as if the frightful skeleton was before him, and he had not his accounts ready. When a little recovered, he fribbled with his waistcoat buttons, as if he had been telling his beads.

This, Sir, proceeded I, is her wooer!—Nay, she is so forward a girl, that she *wooes him*: But I hope it never will be a-match.

He had before behaved, and now looked, with more spirit than I expected from him.

I came, Sir, said he, as a mediator of differences. It behoves me to keep my temper. But, Sir, and turned short upon me, as much as I love peace, and to promote it, I will not be ill-used.

As I had played so much upon him, it would have been wrong to take him at his *more* than half-menace: Yet, I think, I owe him a grudge, for his presuming to address Miss Howe.

You mean no defiance, I presume, Mr. Hickman, any more than I do offence. On that presumption, I ask your excuse. But This is my way. I mean no harm. I cannot let sorrow touch my heart. I cannot be grave six minutes together, for the blood of me. I am a descendant of old Chancellor More, I believe; and should not forbear to cut a joke, were I upon the scaffold. But you may gather, from what I have *said*, that I prefer Miss Harlowe, and that upon the justest grounds, to all the women in the world: And I wonder, that there should be any difficulty to believe, from what I have signed, and from what I have promised to my relations, and enabled them to promise for me, that I should be glad to marry that excellent lady, upon her own terms. I acknowledge to you, Mr. Hickman, that I have basely injured her.. If

she will honour me with her hand, I declare, that it is my intention to make her the best of husbands. But, nevertheless, I must say, that, if she goes on appealing her case, and exposing us both, as she does, it is impossible to think the knot can be knit, with reputation to either. And altho', Mr. Hickman, I have delivered my apprehensions under so ludicrous a figure, I am afraid, that she will ruin her constitution; and, by seeking death when she may shun him, will not be able to avoid him when she would be glad to do so.

This cool and honest speech let down his stiffened muscles into complacency. He was my very obedient and faithful humble servant several times over, as I waited on him to his chariot: And I was his almost as often.

And so *Exit Hickman.*

## LETTER LIV.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

[In answer to Letters xlviij. li. iii.]

Friday night, July 21.

I WILL throw away a few paragraphs upon the contents of thy last shocking letters, just brought me; and send what I shall write by the fellow who carries mine on the interview with Hickman.

Reformation, I see, is coming fast upon thee. Thy uncle's slow death, and thy attendance upon him, thro' every stage towards it, prepared thee for it. But go thou on in thy own way, as I will in mine. Happiness consists in being pleased with what we do: And if thou canst find delight in being *sad*, it will be as well for thee, as if thou wert *merry*, tho' no other person should join to keep thee in countenance.

I am, nevertheless, exceedingly disturbed at the lady's ill health. It is intirely owing to the cursed arrest. She was absolutely triumphant over me, and the whole crew, before. Thou believest me guiltless of That: So, I hope, does she. — The rest, as I have often said, is a common case; only a little uncommonly circumstanced; that's all: Why, then, all these severe things from her and thee?

As to selling her cloaths, and her laces, and so forth,

it

it has, I own, a shocking sound with it. What an implacable, as well as unjust, set of wretches are those of her unkindredly kin; who have money of hers in their hands, as well as large arrears of her own estate; yet withhold both, avowedly to distress her! But may she not have money of that proud and saucy friend of hers, Miss Howe, more than she wants? — And should I not be overjoyed, thinkst thou, to serve her? — What then is there in the parting with her apparel, but female perverseness? — And I am not sure, whether I ought not to be glad, if she does this out of *s spite to me.* — Some disappointed fair-ones would have hanged, some drowned, themselves. My beloved only revenges herself upon her cloaths. Different ways of working has passion in different bosoms, as humour and complexion induce. — Besides, dost think I shall grudge to replace, to three times the value, what she disposes of? So, Jack, there is no great matter in this.

Thou seest how sensible she is of the soothings of the polite Doctor: This will enable thee to judge how dreadfully the horrid arrest, and her gloomy father's curse, must have hurt her. I have great hope, if she will but see me, that my behaviour, my contrition, my soothings, may have some happy effects upon her.

But thou art too ready to give me up. Let me seriously tell thee, that, all excellence as she is, I think the earnest interposition of my relations; the implored mediation of that little fury Miss Howe; and the commissions thou accept under from myself; are such instances of condescension and high value in them, and such contrition in me, that nothing farther can be done. — So here let the matter rest for the present, till she considers better of it.

But now a few words upon poor Belton's case. I own I was, at first, a little startled at the infidelity of his Thomasine: Her hypocrisy to be for so many years undetected! — I have very lately had some intimations given me of her vileness; and had intended to mention it to thee, when I saw thee. To say the truth, I always suspected her. The eye, thou knowest, is the *casement*, at which the heart generally looks out. Many a woman, who will not shew herself at the door, has tipt the fly, the intelligible *wink* from the *windows*.

But Tom had no management at all. A very careless fellow. Would never look into his own affairs. The estate his uncle left him was his ruin: Wife, or mistress, whoever was, must have had his fortune to sport with.

I have often hinted his weaknesses of this sort to him; and the danger he was in of becoming the property of designing people. But he hated to take pains. He would ever run away from his accounts; as now, poor fellow! he would be glad to do from himself. Had he not had a woman to fleece him, his *coachman*, or *valet*, would have been his *prime minister*, and done it as effectually.

But yet, for many years I thought she was true to his bed. At least, I thought the boys were his own. For tho' they are muscular, and big-boned, yet I supposed the healthy mother might have furnished them with legs and shoulders: For she is not of a delicate frame; and then Tom, some years ago, looked up, and spoke more like a man, than he has done of late; squeaking inwardly, poor fellow! for some time past, from contracted quail-pipes, and wheezing from lungs half spit away.

He complains, thou sayest, that we all run away from him. Why, after all, Belford, it is no pleasant thing to see a poor fellow one loves, dying by inches, yet unable to do him good. There are friendships which are only *bottle-deep*: I should be loth to have it thought, that mine for any of my vassals is such a one. Yet, to gay hearts, which became intimate because they were gay, the reason for their first intimacy ceasing, the friendship will fade; that sort of friendship, I mean, which may be distinguished, more properly, by the word *companionship*.

But mine, as I said, is deeper than this: I would still be as ready as ever I was in my life, to the utmost of my power, to do him service.

As one instance of this my readiness to extricate him from all his difficulties as to Thomasine, dost thou care to propose to him an expedient, that is just come into my head?

It is this: I would engage Thomasine, and her cubs, if Belton be convinced they are neither of them his, in a party of pleasure: She was always complaisant to me: It should

should be in a boat hired for the purpose, to sail to Tilbury, to the isle of Sheepy, or a pleasuring up the Medway; and 'tis but contriving to turn the boat bottom-upward: I can swim like a fish: Another boat should be ready to take up whom I should direct, for fear of the worst: And then, if Tom. has a mind to be decent, one suit of mourning will serve for all three: Nay, the hostler-cousin may take his plunge from the steerage: And who knows but they may be thrown up on the beach, Thomasine and he, hand in hand?

This, thou'l't say, is no *common* instance of friendship. Mean time, do thou prevail upon him to come down to us: He never was more welcome in his life, than he shall be now: If he will not, let him find me some other service; and I will clap a pair of wings to my shoulders, and he shall see me come flying in at his windows at the word of command.

As for thy resolution of repenting and marrying; I would have thee consider which thou wilt set about first. If thou wilt follow my advice, thou shalt make short work of it: Let Matrimony take place of the other; for then thou wilt, very possibly, have Repentance come tumbling in fast upon thee, as a consequence, and so have both in one.

## LETTER LV.

*Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;*

*Friday noon, July 21.*

**T**HIS morning I was admitted, as soon as I sent up my name, into the presence of the divine lady. Such I may call her; as what I have to relate will fully prove.

She had had a tolerable night, and was much better in spirits; though weak in person; and visibly declining in looks.

Mrs. Lovick and Mrs. Smith were with her; and accused her, in a gentle manner, of having applied herself too assiduously to her pen for her strength, having been up ever since five. She said, she had rested better than she had done for many nights: She had found her spirit

free, and her mind tolerably easy : And having, as she had reason to think, but a short time, and much to do in it ; she must be a good housewife of her hours.

She had been writing, she said, a letter to her sister : But had not pleased herself in it ; tho' she had made two or three essays : But that the last must go.

By hints I had dropt, from time to time, she had reason, she said, to think that I knew every-thing that concerned her and her family ; and, if so, must be acquainted with the heavy curse her father had laid upon her ; which had been dreadfully fulfilled in one part, as to her temporary prospects, and that in a very short time ; which gave her great apprehensions for the other. She had been applying herself to her sister, to obtain a revocation of it. I hope my father will revoke it, said she, or I shall be very miserable.— Yet (and she gasped as she spoke, with apprehension)—I am ready to tremble at what the answer may be ; for my sister is hard-hearted.

I said something reflecting upon her friends ; as to what they would deserve to be thought of, if the unmerited imprecation were not withdrawn.—Upon which she took me up, and talked in such a dutiful manner of her parents, as must doubly condemn them (if they remain implacable), for their inhuman treatment of such a daughter.

She said, I must not blame her parents : It was her dear Miss Howe's fault. But what an enormity was there in her crime, which could set the best of parents (as they had been to her, till she disengaged them) in a bad light, for resenting the rashness of a child, from whose education they had reason to expect better fruits ! There were some hard circumstances in her case, it was true : But my friend could tell me, that no *one* body, throughout the whole fatal transaction, had acted out of character, but *herself*. She submitted therefore to the penalty she had incurred. If they had any fault, it was only, that they would not inform themselves of some circumstances, which would alleviate a little her misdeed ; and that, supposing her a guiltier creature than she was, they punished her without a hearing.

Lord !—*I was going to curse thee, Lovelace ! How every instance of excellence, in this all-excelling creature, condemns thee ?*

*shee!—Thou wilt have reason to think thyself of all men  
most accursed, if she die!*

I then besought her, while she was capable of such glorious instances of generosity and forgiveness, to extend her goodness to a man, whose heart bled in every vein of it, for the injuries he had done her; and who would make it the study of his whole life to repair them.

The women would have withdrawn, when the subject became so particular. But she would not permit them to go. She told me, that if, after this time, I was for entering, with so much earnestness, into a subject so very disagreeable to her, my visits must not be repeated. Nor was there occasion, she said, for my friendly offices in your favour; since she had begun to write her whole mind upon that subject to Miss Howe, in answer to letters from her, in which Miss Howe urged the same arguments, in compliment to the wishes of your noble and worthy relations.

Mean time, you may let him know, said she, That I reject him with my whole heart:—Yet that, altho' I say this with such a determination as shall leave no room for doubt, however I say it not with passion. On the contrary, tell him, that I am trying to bring my mind into such a frame, as to be able to pity him (Poor perfidious wretch! what has he not to answer for!); and that I shall not think myself qualified for the state I am aspiring to, if, after a few struggles more, I cannot forgive him too: And I hope, clasping her hands together, uplifted, as were her eyes, my dear earthly father will set me the example my heavenly one has already set us all; and, by forgiving his fallen daughter, teach her to forgive the man, who then, I hope, will not have destroyed my eternal prospects, as he has my temporal!

*Stop here, thou wretch!—But I need not bid thee—For I  
can go no farther!*

## LETTER LVI.

*Mr. BELFORD. In Continuation.*

**V**OU will imagine how affecting her noble speech and behaviour was to me, at the time, when the bare

bare recollection and transcription obliged me to drop my pen. The women had tears in their eyes. I was silent for a few moments.—At last, Matchless excellence! Inimitable goodness! I called her, with a voice so accented, that I was half-ashamed of myself, as it was before the women.—But who could stand such sublime generosity of soul, in so young a creature, her loveliness giving grace to all she said?—Methinks, said I (and I really, in a manner involuntarily, bent my knee), I have before me an angel indeed. I can hardly forbear prostration, and to beg your influence to draw me after you, to the world you are aspiring to!—Yet—But what shall I say?—Only, dearest excellence, make me, in some small instances, serviceable to you, that I may (if I survive you) have the glory to think I was able to contribute to your satisfaction, while among us.

Here I stopt. She was silent. I proceeded—Have you no commission to employ me in; deserted as you are by all your friends; among strangers, though, I doubt not, worthy people? Cannot I be serviceable by message, by letter-writing, by attending personally, with either message or letter, your father, your uncles, your brother, your sister, Miss Howe, Lord M. or the ladies his sisters? Any office to be employed in to serve you, absolutely *independent* of my friend's wishes, or of my own wishes to oblige him. Think, Madam, if I cannot?

I thank you, Sir: Very heartily I thank you: But in nothing that I can at present think of, or at least resolve upon, can you do me service. I will see what return the letter I have written will bring me.—Till then—

My life and my fortune, interrupted I, are devoted to your service. Permit me to observe, that here you are, without one natural friend; and (so much do I know of your unhappy case) that you must be in a manner destitute of the means to *make* friends—

She was going to interrupt me, with a prohibitory kind of earnestness in her manner—

I beg leave to proceed, Madam: I have cast about twenty ways how to mention this before, but never dared till now. Suffer me, now that I have broke the ice, to tender myself—as your *banker* only.—I know you will

not be obliged: You *need* not. You have sufficient of your own, if it were in your hands; and from *that*, whether you live or die, will I consent to be reimbursed. I do assure you, that the unhappy man shall never know either my offer, or your acceptance—Only permit me this small—

And down behind her chair I dropt a Bank note of 100*l.* which I had brought with me, intending some how or other to leave it behind me: Nor shouldst thou ever have known it, had she favoured me with the acceptance of it; and so I told her.

You give me great pain, Mr. Belford, said she, by these instances of your humanity. And yet, considering the company I have seen you in, I am not sorry to find you capable of such. Methinks I am glad, for the sake of human nature, that there could be but *one* such man in the world, as him you and I know.—But as to your kind offer, whatever it be, if you take it not up, you will greatly disturb me. I have no need of your kindness. I have effects enough, which I never can want, to supply my present occasions; and, if needful, can have recourse to Miss Howe. I have promised that I would—So, pray, Sir, urge not upon me this favour.—Take it up yourself.—If you mean me peace and ease of mind, urge not this favour.—And she spoke with impatience.

I beg, Madam, but one word—

Not one, Sir, till you have taken back what you have let fall. I doubt not either the *honour*, or the *kindness*, of your offer; but you must not say one word more on this subject. I cannot bear it.

She was stooping, but with pain. I therefore prevented her; and besought her to forgive me for a tender, which, I saw, had been more discomposing to her than I had hoped (from the purity of my intentions), it would be. But I could not bear to think, that such a mind as hers should be distressed: Since the want of the conveniences she was used to abound in might affect and disturb her in the divine course she was in.

You are very kind to me, Sir, said she, and very favourable in your opinion of me. But I hope, that I cannot now be easily put out of my present course. My declining health will more and more confirm me in it. Those

who arrested and confined me, no doubt, thought they had fallen upon the ready method to distress me so, as to bring me into all their measures. But I presume to hope, that I have a mind that cannot be debased, in *essential instances*, by *temporary calamities*: Little do those poor wretches know of the force of innate principles, forgive my own *implied vanity*, was her word, who imagine, that a prison, or penury, or want, can bring a right-turned mind to be guilty of a wilful baseness, in order to avoid such *short-lived evils*.

She then turned from me towards the window, with a dignity suitable to her words; and such as shewed her to be more of soul than of body, at that instant.

What magnanimity! — No wonder a virtue so solidly based could baffle all thy arts: — And that it forced thee (in order to carry thy accursed point) to have recourse to those un-natural ones, which robbed her of her charming sensess.

The women were extremely affected, Mrs. Lovick especially; — who said whisperingly to Mrs. Smith; We have an angel, not a woman, with us, Mrs. Smith!

I repeated my offers to write to any of her friends; and told her, that, having taken the liberty to acquaint Dr. H. with the cruel displeasure of her relations, as what I presumed lay nearest her heart, he had proposed to write himself, to acquaint her friends how ill she was, if she would not take it amiss.

It was kind in the *Doctor*, she said: But begged, that no step of that sort might be taken without her knowledge and consent. She would wait to see what effects her letter to her sister would have. All she had to hope for, was, that her father would revoke his malediction: For the rest, her friends would think she could not suffer too much; and she was content to suffer: For, now, nothing could happen, that could make her wish to live.

Mrs. Smith went down; and, soon returning, asked, If the lady and I would not dine with her that day: For it was her wedding-day. She had engaged Mrs. Lovick, she said; and should have no-body else, if we would do her that favour.

The charming creature sighed, and shook her head—

*Wedding-day*, repeated she! — I wish you, Mrs. Smith, many happy wedding-days! — But you will excuse me.

Mr. Smith came up with the same request. They both applied to me.

On condition the *lady* would, I should make no scruple; and would suspend an engagement: Which I actually had.

She then desired they would all sit down. You have several times, Mrs. Lovick and Mrs. Smith, hinted your wishes, that I would give you some little history of myself: Now, if you are at leisure, that this gentleman, who, I have reason to believe, knows it all, is present, and can tell you if I give it justly, or not; I will oblige your curiosity.

They all eagerly, the man Smith too, sat down; and she began an account of herself, which I will endeavour to repeat, as nearly in her own words, as I possibly can: For I know you will think it of importance to be apprised of her manner of relating your barbarity to her, as well as what her sentiments are of it; and what room there is for the hopes your friends have in your favour, from her.

‘ At first when I took these lodgings, said she, I thought of staying but a short time in them; and so, Mrs. Smith, I told you: I therefore avoided giving any other account of myself, than that I was a very unhappy young creature, seduced from good friends, and escaped from very vile wretches.

‘ This account I thought myself obliged to give, that you might the less wonder at seeing a young body rushing thro’ your shop, into your back apartment, all trembling, and out of breath; an ordinary garb over my own; craving lodging and protection; only giving my bare word, that you should be handsomely paid: All my effects contained in a pocket-handkerchief.

‘ My sudden absence, for three days and nights together, when arrested, must still further surprise you: And altho’ this gentleman, who, perhaps, knows more of the darker part of my story, than I do myself, has informed you (as you, Mrs. Lovick, tell me), that I am only an *unhappy*, not a *guilty* creature; yet I think it incumbent upon me not to suffer honest minds to be in doubt about my character.

‘ You

' You must know, then, that I have been, in one instance (I had like to have said *but* in one instance; but that was a capital one), an undutiful child, to the most indulgent of parents: For what some people call cruelty in them, is owing but to the excess of their love, and to their disappointment; having had reason to expect better from me.

' I was visited (at first, with my friends connivance) by a man of birth and fortune, but of worse principles, as it proved, than I believed any man could have. My brother, a very headstrong young man, was absent at that time; and, when he returned (from an old grudge, and knowing the gentleman, it is plain, better than I knew him), intirely disapproved of his visits: And, having a great sway in our family, brought other gentlemen to address me: And at last (several having been rejected) he introduced one extremely disagreeable: In every *indifferent* body's eyes disagreeable. I could not love him. They all joined to compel me to have him; a renounter between the gentleman my friends were set against, and my brother, having confirmed them all his enemies.

' To be short: I was confined, and treated so very hardly, that, in a rash fit, I appointed to go off with the man they hated. A wicked intention, you'll say: But I was greatly provoked. Nevertheless, I repented; and resolved not to go off with him; yet I did not mistrust his honour to me neither; nor his love; because nobody thought me unworthy of the latter, and my fortune was not to be despised. But foolishly (wickedly, as my friends still think, and contrivingly, with a design, as they imagine, to abandon them) giving him a private meeting, I was trick'd away; poorly enough trick'd away, I must needs say; tho' others, who had been first guilty of so rash a step, as the meeting of him was, might have been so deceived and surprised, as well as I.

' After remaining some time at a farm-house in the country, behaving to me all the time with honour, he brought me to handsome lodgings in town, till still better provision could be made for me. But they proved to be, as he indeed knew and designed, at a vile, a very vile creature's; tho' it was long before I found

' her out to be so ; for I knew nothing of the town, or  
' its ways.

' There is no repeating what followed : Such unpre-  
' cedented vile arts !—for I gave him no opportunity to  
' take me at any disreputable advantage." —

And here (half covering her sweet face, with her hand-  
kerchief put to her tearful eyes) she stopt.

Hastily, as if she would fly from the hateful remem-  
brance, she resumed : --- ' I made my escape afterwards  
from the abominable house in his absence, and came to  
yours : And this gentleman has almost prevailed on me  
to think, that the ingrateful man did not connive at the  
vile arrest : Which was made, no doubt, in order to  
get me once more to those wicked lodgings : For no-  
thing do I owe them, except I were to pay them" —  
(She sighed, and again wiped her charming eyes---adding  
in a softer, lower voice) --- " *for being ruined!*" —

Indeed, Madam, said I, guilty, abominably guilty, as  
he is in all the rest, he is innocent of this last wicked  
outrage.

' Well, and so I wish him to be. That evil, heavy  
as it was, is one of the lightest evils I have suffered.  
But hence you'll observe, Mrs. Lovick (for you seemed  
this morning curious to know if I were not a wife),  
that I *never was married*.—You, Mr. Belford, no doubt,  
knew before, that I am no wife : And now I never will  
be one. Yet, I bless God, that I am not a guilty  
creature !

' As to my parentage, I am of no mean family : I  
have in my own right, by the intended favour of my  
grandfather, a fortune not contemptible : Independent  
of my father, if I had pleased ; but I never will please.  
My father is very rich. I went by another name  
when I came to you first : But that was to avoid being  
discovered to the perfidious man ; who now engages,  
by this gentleman, not to molest me.

' My real name you now know to be Harlowe : *Clarissa*  
Harlowe. I am not yet twenty years of age.

' I have an excellent mother, as well as father ; a  
woman of family, and fine sense—Worthy of a better  
child !—They both doated upon me.

‘ I have two good uncles : Men of great fortune ; jealous of the honour of their family ; which I have wounded.

‘ I was the joy of their hearts ; and, with theirs and my father’s, I had three houses to call my own ; for they used to have me with them by turns, and almost kindly to quarrel for me : So that I was two months in the year at one’s house ; two months at the other’s : Six months at my father’s ; and two at the houses of others of my dear friends, who thought themselves happy in me : And whenever I was at any one’s, I was crowded upon with letters by all the rest, who longed for my return to them.

‘ In short, I was beloved by every-body. The Poor --- I used to make glad *their* hearts : I never shut my hand to any distress, where-ever I was --- But now I am poor myself !

‘ So, Mrs. Smith, so, Mrs. Lovick, I am *not* married. It is but just to tell you so. And I am now, as I ought to be, in a state of humiliation and penitence for the rash step which has been followed by so much evil. God, I hope, will forgive me, as I am endeavouring to bring my mind to forgive all the world, even the man who has ingratefully, and by dreadful perjuries (Poor wretch ! he thought all his wickedness to be *wit!* ), reduced to this, a young creature, who had *his* happiness in her *view*, and in her *wish*, even beyond this life ; and who was believed to be of rank, and fortune, and expectations, considerable enough to make it the *interest* of any gentleman in England to be faithful to his vows to her. But I cannot expect that my parents will forgive me : My refuge must be death ; the most painful kind of which I would suffer, rather than be the wife of one who could act by me, as the man has acted, upon whose birth, education, and honour, I had so much reason to found better expectations.

‘ I see, continued she, that I, who once was every-one’s delight, am now the cause of grief to every-one--- You, that are strangers to me, are moved for me ! ’Tis kind ! --- But ’tis time to stop. Your compassionate hearts, Mrs. Smith, and Mrs. Lovick, are too much

' touched' (For the women sobb'd again, and the man was also affected). 'It is barbarous in me, with my ' woes, thus to sadden your wedding-day.' Then turning to Mr. and Mrs. Smith---' May you see many happy ones, ' honest, good couple! --- How agreeable is it to see you ' both join so kindly to celebrate it, after many years are ' gone over you !---I once---But no more!--All my pro- 'spects of felicity, as to this life, are at an end. My ' hopes, like opening buds or blossoms in an over-forward ' spring, have been nipt by a severe frost!--Blighted by ' an eastern wind!--But I can but *once die*; and if life ' be spared me, but till I am discharged from a heavy ' malediction, which my father in his wrath laid upon ' me, and which is fulfilled literally in every article re- ' lating to this world, it is all I have to wish for; and ' death will be welcomer to me, than rest to the most ' wearied traveller, that ever reached his journey's-end.'

And then she sunk her head against the back of her chair, and, hiding her face with her handkerchief, endeavoured to conceal her tears from us.

Not a soul of us could speak a word. Thy presence, perhaps, thou harden'd wretch, might have made us ashamed of a weakness, which, perhaps, thou wilt deride *me* in particular for, when thou readest this!--

She retired to her chamber soon after, and was forced, it seems, to lie down. We all went down together; and, for an hour and half, dwelt upon her praises; Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Lovick repeatedly expressing their astonishment, that there could be a man in the world capable of offending, much more of wilfully injuring, such a lady; and repeating, that they had an angel in their house.—I thought they had; and that as assuredly as there was a devil under the roof of good Lord M.

I hate thee heartily! — By my faith I do! — Every hour I hate thee more than the former! —

J. BELFORD.

L E T.

LETTER LVII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Sat. July 22.

WHAT dost hate me for, Belford? — And why more and more? — Have I been guilty of any offence thou knewest not before? — If *pathos* can move such a heart as thine, can it alter facts? — Did I not always do this incomparable creature as much justice as thou canst do her for the heart of thee, or as she can do herself? — What nonsense then thy hatred, thy *augmented* hatred, when I still persist to marry her, pursuant to word given to thee, and to faith plighted to all my relations? But hate, if thou wilt, so thou dost but write: Thou canst not hate me so much as I do myself: And yet I know, if thou really hatedst me, thou wouldst not venture to tell me so.

Well, but after all, what need of her history to these women? She will certainly repent, some time hence, that she has thus needlessly exposed us both.

Sickness pals every appetite, and makes us hate what we loved: But renewed health changes the scene; disposes us to be pleased with ourselves; and then we are in a way to be pleased with every-one else. Every hope, then, rises upon us: Every hour presents itself to us on dancing feet: And what Mr. Addison says of Liberty, may, with still greater propriety, be said of Health (*For what is Liberty itself without Health?*):

*It makes the gloomy face of nature gay;  
Gives beauty to the sun, and pleasure to the day.*

And I rejoice that she is already so much better, as to hold, with strangers, such a long and interesting conversation.

Strange, confoundedly strange, and as perverse (that is to say, as *womanly*) as strange, that she should refuse, and sooner choose to die—[O the obscene word! and yet how free does thy pen make with it to me!], than be mine, who offended her by acting *in character*, while her parents acted shamefully *out of theirs*, and when I am now

willing to act *out of my own* to oblige her : Yet I not to be forgiven ! They to be faultless with her !—And marriage the only medium to repair all breaches, and to salve her own honour !—Surely thou must see the inconsistence of her *forgiving* unforgivingness, as I may call it !—Yet, heavy varlet as thou art, thou wantest to be drawn up after her ! And what a figure dost thou make with thy speeches, stiff as Hickman's ruffles, with thy aspirations and prostrations !—Unused, thy weak head, to bear the sublimities that fall, even in common conversation, from the lips of this ever-charming creature !

But the prettiest whim of all, was to drop the bank note behind her chair, instead of presenting it on thy knees to her hand ! — To make such a lady as this *doubly* stoop—By the acceptance, and to take it from the ground! ---What an ungraceful *benefit-conferrer* art thou ! How awkward, to take it into thy head, that the best way of making a present to a lady, was to throw the present behind her chair !

I am very desirous to see what she has written to her sister ; what she is about to write to Miss Howe ; and what return she will have from the Harlowe-Arabella. Canst thou not form some scheme to come at the copies of these letters, or at the substance of them at least, and of that of her other correspondencies ? Mrs. Lovick, thou seemest to say, is a pious woman : The lady, having given such a particular history of herself, will acquaint her with every-thing. And art thou not about to reform ?---Won't this consent of minds between thee and the widow [What age is she, Jack ? The devil never trumpt up a friendship between a man and a woman, of any-thing like years, which did not end in matrimony, or the dissipation of both their morals ! won't it] strike out an intimacy between ye, that may enable thee to gratify me in this particular ? A proselyte, I can tell thee, has great influence upon your good people : Such a one is a saint of their own creation ; and they will water, and cultivate, and cherish him, as a plant of their own raising ; and this from a pride truly spiritual !

But one consolation arises to me, from the pretty regrets this admirable creature seems to have, in indulging reflections

reflections on the peoples wedding-day : ---I once! ---thou makest her break off with saying.

*She once!* What? --- O Belford! why didst thou not urge her to explain what she *once* hoped?

What once a lady hopes, in love-matters, she always hopes, while there is room for hope: And are we not both single? Can she be any man's but mine? Will I be any woman's but hers?

I never will! I never can! --- And I tell thee, that I am every day, every hour, more and more in love with her: And, at this instant, have a more vehement passion for her than ever I had in my life! --- And that with views absolutely honourable, in *her own sense* of the word: Nor have I varied, so much as in *wish*, for this week past; firmly fixed, and wrought into my very nature, as the *life of honour*, or of generous confidence in me, was, in preference to the *life of doubt* and *distrust*: That must be a *life of doubt* and *distrust*, surely, where the woman confides nothing, and ties up a man for his good behaviour for life, taking church and state sanctions in aid of the obligation she imposes upon him.

I shall go on Monday morning to a kind of Ball, to which Colonel Ambrose has invited me. It is given on a family account. I care not on what: For all that delights me in the thing, is, that Mrs. and Miss Howe are to be there; Hickman, of course; for the old lady will not stir abroad without him. The Colonel is in hopes, that Miss Arabella Harlowe will be there likewise; for all the fellows and women of fashion round him are invited.

I fell in by accident with the Colonel, who, I believe, hardly thought I would accept of the invitation. But he knows me not, if he thinks I am ashamed to appear at any place, where ladies dare shew their faces. Yet he hinted to me, that my name *was up*, on Miss Harlowe's account. But, to allude to one of my uncle's phrases, if it be, I will not *lie abed* when any-thing joyous is going forward.

As I shall go in my Lord's chariot, I would have had one of my cousins Montague to go with me: But they both refused: And I sha'n't choose to take either of thy

brethren. It would look as if I thought I wanted a body-guard : Besides, one of them is too rough, the other too smooth, and too great a fop for some of the staid company that will be there ; and for *me* in particular. Men are known by their companions ; and a fop (as Tourville, for example) takes great pains to hang out a sign, by his dress, of what he has in his shop. Thou, indeed, art an exception ; dressing like a coxcomb, yet a very clever fellow. Nevertheless so clumsy a beau, that thou seemest to me, to owe thyself a double spite, making thy ungracefulness appear the *more* ungraceful, by thy remarkable tawdriness when thou art out of mourning.

I remember, when I first saw thee, my mind laboured with a strong puzzle, whether I should put thee down for a great fool, or a smatterer in wit : Something I saw was wrong in thee, by thy *dress*. If this fellow, thought I, delights not so much in *ridicule*, that he will not spare *himself*, he must be plaguy silly to take so much pains to make his ugliness more conspicuous than it would otherwise be.

Plain dress, for an ordinary man or woman, implies at least *modesty*, and always procures kind quarter from the censorious. Who will ridicule a personal imperfection in one that seems conscious that it *is* an imperfection ? *Who ever said, an anchoret was poor?* But to such as appear proud of their deformity, or bestow tinsel upon it, in hopes to set it off, who would spare so very absurd a wronghead ?

But, altho' I put on these lively airs, I am sick at my soul !—My whole heart is with my charmer ! With what indifference shall I look upon all the assemblée at the Colonel's, my Beloved in my ideal eye, and engrossing my whole heart ?

### LETTER LVIII.

*Miss Howe, To Miss ARABELLA HARLOWE.*

*Miss HARLOWE,* Thursday, July 20.  
**I** Cannot help acquainting you, however it may be received, as coming from *me*, that your poor sister is dangerously ill, at the house of one Smith, who keeps a glover's and perfume-

perfume-shop, in King-street, Covent-Garden. She knows not that I write. Some violent words, in the nature of an imprecation, from her father, afflict her greatly in her weak state. I presume not to direct to you what to do in this case. You are her sister. I therefore could not help writing to you, not only for her sake, but for your own.

*I am, Madam,*

*Your humble Servant,*

ANNA HOWE.

## LETTER LIX.

*Miss ARABELLA HARLOWE, To Miss Howe.*

*Miss Howe,*

*Thursday, July 20.*

I Have yours of this morning. All that has happened to the unhappy body you mention, is what we foretold, and expected. Let him, for whose sake she abandoned us, be her comfort. We are told he has remorse, and would marry her. We don't believe it, indeed. She may be very ill. Her disappointment may make her so, or ought. Yet is she the only one I know, who is disappointed.

I cannot say, Miss, that the notification from you is the more welcome for the liberties you have been pleased to take with our whole family, for resenting a conduct, that it is a shame any young lady should justify. Excuse this freedom, occasioned by greater.

*I am, Miss, Your humble Servant,*

ARABELLA HARLOWE.

## LETTER LX.

*Miss Howe. In Reply.*

*Miss ARABELLA HARLOWE,*

*Friday, July 21.*

If you had half as much sense as you have ill-nature, you would (notwithstanding the exuberance of the latter) have been able to distinguish between a kind intention to you all (that you might have the less to reproach yourselves with, if a deplorable case should happen), and an officiousness I owed you not, by reason of freedoms at least reciprocal. I will not, for the unhappy body's sake, as you call a sister you have helped to make so, say all that

I

I could say. If what I fear happen, you shall hear  
(whether desired or not) all the mind of

ANNA HOWE.

## LETTER LXI.

*Miss ARABELLA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.*

*Miss ANN HOWE,*

*Friday July 21.*

YOUR pert letter I have received. You, that spare no-body, I cannot expect should spare me. You are very happy in a prudent and watchful mother—But else—Mine cannot be exceeded in prudence: But we had all too good an opinion of Somebody, to think watchfulness needful. There may possibly be some reason why you are so much attached to her, in an error of this flagrant nature.

I help to make a sister unhappy!—It is false, Miss!—It is all her own doings!—Except, indeed, what she may owe to Somebody's advice—You know who can best answer for that.

Let us know your mind as soon as you please: As we shall know it to be your mind, we shall judge what attention to give it. That's all, from, &c.

AR. H.

## LETTER LXII.

*Miss HOWE, To Miss ARABELLA HARLOWE.*

*Sat. July 22.*

IT may be the misfortune of some people to engage every-body's notice: Others may be the happier, tho they may be the more envious, for no-body's thinking them worthy of any. But one would be glad people had the sense to be thankful for that want of consequence, which subjected them not to hazards they would hardly have been able to manage under.

I own to you, that had it not been for the prudent advice of that admirable Somebody (whose principal fault is the superiority of her talents, and whose misfortune to be brother'd and sister'd by a couple of creatures, who are not able to comprehend her excellencies), I might at one time have been plunged into difficulties. But, pert as the super-

superlatively pert may think me, I thought not myself wiser, because I was older; nor for that poor reason qualified to prescribe to, much less to maltreat, a genius so outsoaring.

I repeat it with gratitude, that the dear creature's advice was of very great service to me—And this before my mother's watchfulness became necessary. But how it would have fared with me, I cannot say, had I had a brother or sister, who had deemed it their interest, as well as a gratification of their sordid envy, to misrepresent me.

Your admirable sister, in effect, saved you, Miss, as well as me—with this difference—You, against your will—Me, with mine: And but for your own brother, and his own sister, would not have been lost herself.

Would to God both sisters had been obliged with their own wills!—The most admirable of her sex would never then have been out of her father's house!—You, Miss—I don't know what had become of you.—But, let what would have happened, you would have met with the humanity you have not shewn, whether you had deserved it or not:—Nor, at worst, lost either a kind sister, or a pitying friend, in the most excellent of sisters.

But why run I into length to such a poor thing?—Why push I so weak an adversary? whose first letter is all low malice, and whose next is made up of falsehood and inconsistence, as well as spite and ill-manners. Yet I was willing to give you a part of my mind:—Call for more of it; it shall be at your service: From one, who, tho' she thanks God she is not your sister, is not your enemy: But that she is not the latter, is withheld but by two considerations; one, that you bear, tho' unworthily, a relation to a sister so excellent; the other, that you are not of consequence enough to engage any-thing but the pity and contempt of

A. H.

### LETTER LXIII.

Mrs. HARLOWE, To Mrs. HOWE.

Dear Madam,

Sat. July 22.

I send you inclosed copies of five letters, that have passed between Miss Howe and my Arabella. You are

are a person of so much prudence and good sense, and (being a mother yourself) can so well enter into the distresses of all our family, upon the rashness and ingratitude of a child we once doated upon, that, I dare say, you will not countenance the strange freedoms your daughter has taken with us all. These are not the only ones we have to complain of; but we were silent on the others, as they did not, as these have done, spread themselves out upon paper. We only beg, that we may not be reflected upon by a young lady, who knows not what we have suffered, and do suffer, by the rashness of a naughty creature, who has brought ruin upon herself, and disgrace upon a family, which she has robbed of all comfort. I offer not to prescribe to your known wisdom in this case; but leave it to you to do as you think most proper.

*I am, Madam,*

*Your most humble Servant,*

CHARL. HARLOWE.

## LETTER LXIV.

*Mrs. Howe. In Answer.*

*Dear Madam,*

Sat. July 22.

I Am highly offended with my daughter's letters to Miss Harlowe. I knew nothing at all of her having taken such a liberty. These young creatures have such romantic notions, some of *love*, some of *friendship*, that there is no governing them in either. Nothing but time, and dear experience, will convince them of their absurdities in both. I have chidden Miss Howe very severely. I had before so just a notion of what your whole family's distress must be, that, as I told your brother, Mr. Antony Harlowe, I had often forbid her corresponding with the poor fallen angel—For surely never did young lady more resemble what we imagine of angels, both in person and mind. But, tired out with her headstrong ways (I am sorry to say this of my own child), I was forced to give way to it again: And, indeed, so sturdy was she in her will, that I was afraid it would end in a fit of sickness, as too often it did in fits of sullenness.

*None but parents know the trouble that children give.*  
They

They are happiest, I have often thought, who have none. And these women-grown girls, bless my heart! how ungovernable! —

I believe, however, you will have no more such letters from my Nancy. I have been forced to use compulsion with her, upon Miss Clary's illness (and it seems she is very bad); or she would have run away to London, to attend upon her: And this she calls doing the duty of a friend; forgetting, that she sacrifices to her romantic friendship her duty to a fond indulgent mother.

There are a thousand excellencies in the poor sufferer, notwithstanding her fault: And, if the hints she has given to my daughter be true, she has been most grievously abused. But I think your forgiveness and her father's forgiveness of her ought to be all at your own choice; and no-body should intermeddle in that, for the sake of due authority in parents: And besides, as Miss Harlowe writes, it was what every-body expected, tho' Miss Clary would not believe it, till she smarted for her credulity. And, for these reasons, I offer not to plead any-thing in alleviation of her fault, which is aggravated by her admirable sense, and a judgment above her years.

I am, Madam, with compliments to good Mr. Harlowe, and all your afflicted family,

*Your most humble Servant,*

ANNABELLA HOWE.

I shall set out for the Isle of Wight in a few days, with my daughter. I will hasten our setting-out, on purpose to break her mind from her friend's distresses; which afflict us as much, nearly, as Miss Clary's rashness has done you.

## LETTER LXV.

*Miss Howe, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.*

*My dearest Friend,*

*Sat. July 22.*

WE are busy in preparing for our little journey and voyage: But I will be ill, I will be very ill, if I cannot hear you are better before I go.

Rogers greatly afflicted me, by telling me the bad way you are in. But now you have been able to hold a pen,

and

and as your sense is strong and clear, I hope that the amusement you will receive from writing will make you better.

I dispatch this by an extraordinary way, that it may reach you time enough to move you to consider well before you absolutely decide upon the contents of mine of the 13th, on the subject of the two Misses Montague's visit to me; since, according to what you write, must I answer them.

In your last, you conclude very positively, that you will not be his. To be sure, he rather deserves an infamous death, than such a wife. But, as I really believe him innocent of the arrest, and as all his family are such earnest pleaders, and will be guarantees, for him, I think the compliance with their intreaties, and his own, will be now the best step you can take; your own family remaining implacable, as I can assure you they do. He is a man of sense; and it is not impossible but he may make you a good husband, and in time may become no bad man.

My mother is intirely of my opinion: And on Friday, pursuant to a hint I gave you in my last, Mr. Hickman had a conference with the strange wretch: And tho' he liked not, by any means, his behaviour to himself; nor, indeed, had reason to do so; yet he is of opinion, that he is sincerely determined to marry you, if you will condescend to have him.

Perhaps Mr. Hickman may make you a private visit before we set out. If I may not attend you myself, I shall not be easy, except he does. And he will then give you an account of the admirable character the surprising wretch gave of you, and of the justice he does to your virtue.

He was as acknowledging to his relations, tho' to his own condemnation, as his two cousins told me. All that he apprehends, as he said to Mr. Hickman, is, that if you go on appealing your case, and exposing him, wedlock itself will not wipe off the dishonour to both: And moreover, ' that you would ruin your constitution by ' your immoderate sorrow; and, by seeking death when ' you might avoid it, would not be able to escape it when ' you would wish to do so.'

So, my dearest friend, I charge you, if you *can*, to get over your aversion to this vile man. You may yet live to see many happy days, and be once more the delight of all your friends, neighbours, and acquaintance, as well as a stay, a comfort, and a blessing, to your Anna Howe.

I long to have your answer to mine of the 13th. Pray keep the messenger till it be ready. If he return on Monday night, it will be time enough for his affairs, and to find me come back from Colonel Ambrose's; who gives a Ball on the anniversary of Mrs. Ambrose's birth and marriage, both in one. The gentry all round the neighbourhood are invited this time, on some good news they have received from Mrs. Ambrose's brother the governor.

My mother promised the Colonel for me and herself, in my absence. I would fain have excused myself to her; and the rather, as I had exceptions on account of the day (a): But she is almost as young as her daughter; and thinking it not so well to go without me, she told me, She could propose *nothing* that was agreeable to me. And having had a few *sparring blows* with each other very lately, I think I must comply. For I don't love tangling, when I can help it; tho' I seldom make it my study to avoid the occasion, when it offers of itself. I don't know, if either were not a little afraid of the other, whether it would be possible that we could live together:—*I, All my father!—My mamma—What?—All my mother—What else should I say?*

O my dear, how many things happen in this life to give us displeasure! How few to give us joy!—I am sure, shall have none on this occasion; since the true partner of my heart, the principal half of the *one soul*, that, it used to be said, animated *The pair of friends*, as we were called; You, my dear (who used to irradiate every circle you set your foot into, and to give me *real* significance, in *second* place to yourself), cannot be there!—One hour of our company, my ever-instructive friend (I thirst for it!), now infinitely preferable to me, to all the diversions and amusements, with which our sex are generally most delighted!—Adieu, my dear!—

A. HOWE.

(a) The 24th of July, Miss Clarissa Harlowe's anniversary birth-day.

## LETTER LXVI.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.*

Sunday, July 23.

WHAT pain, my dearest friend, does your kind solicitude for my welfare give me! How much more binding and tender are the ties of pure friendship and the union of like minds, than the ties of nature! Well might the Sweet Singer of Israel, when he was carrying to the utmost extent the praises of the friendship between him and his beloved friend, say, that the love of Jonathan to him was wonderful; that it surpassed the *love of women!* What an exalted idea does it give of the soul of Jonathan, sweetly attemper'd for this sacred band, if we may suppose it but equal to that of my Anna Howe for her fallen Clarissa! But, altho' I can glory in your kind love for me, think, my dear, what concern must fill a mind, not ungenerous, when the obligation lies all on one side: And when, at the same time that your Light is the brighter for my Darkness, I must give pain to a dear friend, to whom I delighted to give pleasure; and, at the same time, discredit, for supporting my blighted fame against the busy tongues of uncharitable censurers!—

This it is that makes me, in the words of my admired exclainer, very little altered, often repeat: "O! that  
" I were as in months past, as in the days when God  
" preserved me! When his candle shined upon my head,  
" and when by his light I walked through darkness!  
" I was in the days of my childhood—when the Almighty  
" was yet with me; when I was in my father's house.  
" When I washed my steps with butter, and the river  
" poured me out rivers of oil!"

You set before me your reasons, enforced by the opinion of your honoured mother, why I should think of Mr. Lovelace for a husband (a).

And I have before me your letter of the 13th (b), containing the account of the visit and proposals, and kind interposition, of the two Misses Montague, in the name

(a) See the preceding letter.

(b) See p. 122. of this Volume.

of the good Ladies Sarah Sadleir and Betty Lawrence, and that of Lord M.

Also yours of the 18th (a), demanding me, as I may say, of those ladies, and of that family, when I was so infamously and cruelly arrested, and you knew not what was become of me :

The answer likewise of those ladies, signed in so full and so generous a manner by themselves (b), and by that nobleman, and those two venerable ladies ; and, in his right way, by the wretch himself :

These, my dearest Miss Howe, and your letter of the 6th (c), which came when I was under arrest, and which received not till some days after :

Are all before me.

And I have as well weighed the whole matter, and your arguments in support of your advice, as at present my head and my heart will let me weigh them.

I am, moreover, willing to believe, not only from your own opinion, but from the assurances of one of Mr. Lovelace's friends, Mr. Belford, a good-natured and humane man, who spares not to censure the author of my calamities (*I think*, with undissembled and undesigning sincerity), that that man is innocent of the disgraceful arrest :

And even, if you please, in sincere compliment to your opinion, and to that of Mr. Hickman, that (over-persuaded by his friends, and ashamed of his unmerited baseness to me) he, in earnest, would marry me, if I would have him.

" \* Well, and now, what is the result of all? — It is this : — That I must abide by what I have already declared — And that is (Don't be angry at me, my best friend) That I have much more pleasure in thinking of death, than of such a husband. In short, as I declared in my last, that I cannot — Forgive me, if I say, I will not — Ever be his.

" But you will expect my reasons : I know you will : " And

(a) See p. 127. of this Volume. (b) See p. 132. (c) See p. 126.

\* These parts of this letter which are marked with inverted comma's thus “ ”, were transcribed afterwards by Miss Howe, in a letter to the ladies of Mr. Lovelace's family, dated July 29. and are thus distinguished to avoid the necessity of repeating them, when that letter comes to be inserted.

“ And if I give them not, will conclude me either obſti-  
 “ nate, or implacable, or both : And those would be sad  
 “ imputations, if just, to be laid to the charge of a per-  
 “ ſon who thinks and talks of *dying*. And yet, to ſay,  
 “ that reſentment and disappointment have no part in my  
 “ determination, would be ſaying a thing hardly to be  
 “ credited. For, I own, I *have* reſentments, ſtrong re-  
 “ ſentments, but not unreasonable ones, as you will be  
 “ convinced, if already you are not ſo, when you know  
 “ all my story—If ever you do know it—For I begin to  
 “ fear (ſo many things more neceſſary to be thought of,  
 “ than either this man, or my own vindication, have I  
 “ to do) that I ſhall not have time to compass what I  
 “ have intended, and, in a manner, promised you (a).

“ I have one reason to give in ſupport of my reſolu-  
 “ tion, that, I believe, yourſelf will allow of: But having  
 “ owned, that I have reſentments, I will begin with thoſe  
 “ conſiderations, in which anger and disappointment have  
 “ too great a ſhare; in hopes, that having once diſbur-  
 “ den'd my mind upon paper, and to my Anna Howe,  
 “ of thoſe corroding uneasy paſſions, I ſhall prevent them  
 “ for ever from returning to my heart, and to have their  
 “ place ſupplied by better, milder, and more agreeable  
 “ ones.

“ My pride, then, my deareſt friend, altho' a great  
 “ deal mortified, is not ſufficiently mortified, if it be ne-  
 “ ceſſary for me to submit to make that man my choice,  
 “ whose actions are, and ought to be, my abhorrence!  
 “ —What!—ſhall I, who have been treated with ſuch  
 “ premeditated and perfidious barbarity, as is painful to  
 “ be thought of, and cannot with modeſty be deſcribed,  
 “ think of taking the violator to my heart? Can I vow  
 “ duty to one ſo wicked, and hazard my ſalvation by  
 “ joining myſelf to ſo great a profligate, now I *know*  
 “ him to be ſo? Do you think your Clarissa Harlowe ſo  
 “ loſt, ſo *funk*, at leaſt, as that ſhe could, for the ſake of  
 “ patching up, in the world's eye, a broken reputation,  
 “ meanly appear indebted to the generosity, or *compassion*,  
 “ perhaps, of a man, who has, by means ſo inhuman,  
 “ robbed her of it? Indeed, my dear, I ſhould not think

“ my

(a) See Letter XXV. p. 85.

" my penitence for the rash step I took, any thing better  
" than a specious delusion, of I had not got above the  
" least wish to have Mr. Lovelace for my husband.

" Yes, I warrant, I must creep to the violator, and be  
" thankful to him for doing me poor justice!

" Do you not already see me (pursuing the advice you  
" give), with a downcast eye, appear before his friends,  
" and before my own (supposing the latter would at last  
" condescend to own me), divested of that noble confidence,  
" which arises from a mind unconscious of having de-  
" served reproach?

" Do you not see me creep about my own house, pre-  
" ferring all my honest maidens to myself, —as if afraid,  
" too, to open my lips, either by way of reproof or ad-  
" monition, lest their bolder eyes should bid me look in-  
" ward, and not expect perfection from them? . . . . .

" And shall I intitle the wretch to upbraid me with  
" his generosity, and his pity; and, perhaps to reproach  
" me, for having been capable of forgiving crimes of such  
" a nature?

" I once indeed hoped, little thinking him so premedi-  
" tatedly vile a man, that I might have the happiness to  
" reclaim him: I vainly believed, that he loved me well  
" enough to suffer my advice for his good, and the ex-  
" ample I humbly presumed I should be enabled to set  
" him, to have weight with him; and the rather, as he  
" had no mean opinion of my morals and understanding:  
" But now, what hope is there left for this my prime hope?  
" —Were I to marry him, what a figure should I make,  
" preaching virtue and morality to a man whom I had  
" trusted with opportunities to seduce me from all my  
" own duties? —And then, supposing I were to have  
" children by such a husband, must it not, think you,  
" cut a thoughtful person to the heart, to look round upon  
" her little family, and think she had given them a fa-  
" ther destin'd, without a miracle, to perdition; and  
" whose immorality, propagated among them by his  
" vile example, might, too probably, bring down a curse  
" upon them? And, after all, who knows but that my  
" own sinful compliances with a man, who would think  
" himself intitled to my obedience, might taint my own

“ morals, and make me, instead of a reformer, an imitator of him?—For who can touch pitch, and not be defiled?

“ Let me then repeat, that I truly despise this man! “ If I know my own heart, indeed I do!—I pity him!— “ Beneath my very pity, as he is, I nevertheless pity him! “ —But this I could not do, if I still loved him: For, “ my dear, one must be greatly sensible of the baseness “ and ingratitude of those we love. I love him not, therefore! My soul despairs communion with him.

“ But altho' thus much is due to resentment, yet have “ I not been so far carried away by its angry effects, as to “ be rendered incapable of casting about what I ought to “ do, and what could be done, if the Almighty, in order to “ lengthen the time of my penitence, were to bid me “ to live.

“ The single life, at such times, has offer'd to me, as the “ life, the only life, to be chosen. But in that, must I not “ now sit brooding over my past afflictions, and mourning “ my faults till the hour of my release? And would not “ every-one be able to assign the reason, why Clarissa “ Harlowe chose solitude, and to sequester herself from “ the world? Would not the look of every creature, who “ beheld me, appear as a reproach to me? And would “ not my conscious eye confess my fault, whether the “ eyes of others accused me, or not? One of my delights “ was, to enter the cots of my poor neighbours, to leave “ lessons to the boys, and cautions to the elder girls: And “ how should I be able, unconscious, and without pain, “ to say to the latter, Fly the delusions of men, who had “ been supposed to have run away with one?

“ What then, my dear and only friend, can I wish for “ but death?—And what, after all, is death? 'Tis but a “ cessation from mortal life: 'Tis but the finishing of an “ appointed course: The refreshing inn after a fatiguing “ journey: The end of a life of cares and troubles; “ and, if happy, the beginning of a life of immortal “ happiness.

“ If I die not now, it may possibly happen, that I “ may be taken when I am less prepared. Had I escaped “ the evils I labour under, it might have been in the

“ midfi

"midst of some gay promising hope; when my heart had beat high with the desire of life; and when the vanity of this earth had taken hold of me.

"But now, my dear, for your satisfaction let me say, "that altho' I wish not for life, yet would I not, like a poor coward, desert my post, when I can maintain it, and when it is my duty to maintain it."

"More than once, indeed, was I urged by thoughts so sinful: But then it was in the height of my distress: "And once, particularly, I have reason to believe, I saved myself by my desperation from the most shocking personal insults: from a repetition, as far as I know, of his vileness; the base women (with so much reason dreaded by me) present, to intimidate me, if not to assist him!— "O my dear, you know not what I suffered on that occasion! — Nor do I what I escaped at the time, if the wicked man had approached me to execute the horrid purposes of his vile heart. High resolution, a courage I never knew before; a settled, not a rash courage; and such a command of my passions—I can only say, I know not how I came by such an uncommon elevation of mind, if it were not given me in answer to my earnest prayers to Heaven for such a command of myself, before I entered into the horrid company."

As I am of opinion, that it would have manifested more of revenge and despair, than of principle, had I committed a violence upon myself, when the villainy was perpetrated; so I should think it equally criminal, were I now wilfully to neglect myself; were I purposely to run into the arms of death (as that man supposes I shall do), when I might avoid it.

Nor, my dear, whatever are the suppositions of such a short-sighted, such a low-souled man, must you impute to gloom, to melancholy, to despondency, nor yet to a spirit of faulty pride, or still more faulty revenge, the resolution I have taken never to marry *this*; and if not *this*, *any* man. So far from deserving this imputation, I do assure you (my dear and *only* love) that I will do every-thing I can to prolong my life, till God, in mercy to me, shall be pleased to call for it. I have reason to

think my punishment is but the due consequence of my fault, and I will not run away from it; but beg of Heaven to sanctify it to me. When appetite serves, I will eat and drink what is sufficient to support nature. A very little, you know, will do for that. And whatever my physicians shall think fit to prescribe, I will take, though ever so disagreeable. In short, I will do every-thing I can do, to convince all my friends, who hereafter may think it worth their while to inquire after my last behaviour, that I possessed my soul with tolerable patience; and endeavoured to bear with a lot of my own drawing: For thus, in humble imitation of the sublimest exemplar, I often say:—Lord, it is thy will; and it shall be mine. Thou art just in all thy dealings with the children of men; and I know thou wilt not afflict me beyond what I can bear: And, if I *can* bear it, I *ought* to bear it; and (thy grace assisting me) I *will* bear it.

“ But here, my dear, is another reason; a reason that “ will convince you yourself, that I ought not to think of “ wedlock; but of a quite different preparation: I am “ persuaded, as much as that I am now alive, that I shall “ not long live. The strong sense I have ever had of my “ fault, the loss of my reputation, my disappointments, “ the determined resentment of my friends, *aiding* the “ barbarous usage I have met with where I least deserved “ it, have seized upon my heart: Seized upon it, before “ it was so well fortified by *religious considerations*, as I “ hope it now is. Don’t be concerned, my dear—But I “ am sure, if I may say it with as little presumption as “ grief, in the words of Job, That God will soon *dissolve* “ *my substance*; and bring me to death, and to the house ap- “ pointed for all living.”

And now, my dearest friend, you know all my mind. And you will be pleased to write to the ladies of Mr. Lovelace’s family. That I think myself infinitely obliged to them, for their good opinion of me; and that it has given me greater pleasure than I thought I had to come in this life, that, upon the little knowledge they have of me, and that not personal, I was thought worthy (after the ill-usage I have received) of an alliance with their honourable family: But that I can by no means think of their kinsman

for a husband: And do you, my dear, extract from the above, such reasons as you think have any weight in them?

I would write myself to acknowlege their favour, had I not more employment for my head, my heart, and my fingers, than I doubt they will be able to go through.

I should be glad to know when you set out on your journey; as also your little stages; and your time of stay at your aunt Harman's; that my prayers may locally attend you, whithersoever you go, and where-ever you are.

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

## LETTER LXVII.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE,

Sunday, July 23.

THE letter accompanying This, being upon a very peculiar subject, I would not embarrass it, as I may say, with any other. And yet having some further matters upon my mind, which will want your excuse for directing them to you, I hope the following lines will have that excuse.

My good Mrs. Norton, so long ago as in a letter dated the 3d of this month, (a) hinted to me, that my relations took amiss some severe things you was pleased, in love to me, to say of them. Mrs. Norton mentioned it with that respectful love which she bears to my dearest friend. But wished, for my sake, that you would rein-in a vivacity, which, on most other occasions, so charmingly becomes you. This was her sense. You know that I am warranted to speak and write freer to my Anna Howe, than Mrs. Norton would do.

I durst not mention it to you at that time, because appearances were so strong against me, on Mr. Lovelace's getting me again into his power, (after my escape to Hamstead) as made you very angry with me when you answered mine on my second escape. And, soon afterwards, I was put under that barbarous arrest; so that I could not well touch upon that subject till now.

Now, therefore, my dearest Miss Howe, let me repeat my earnest request (for This is not the first time by several that I have been obliged to chide you on this occasion),

M 3

That

(a) See p. 38, 39. of this Volume.

That you will spare my parents, and other relations, in all your conversations about me.—Indeed, I wish they had thought fit to take other measures with me: But who shall judge for them?—The event has justified them, and condemned me. They expected nothing good of this vile man; he has not, therefore, deceived *them*: But they expected other things from *me*; and *I* have. And they have the more reason to be set against me, if (as my aunt Hervey wrote formerly (a)) they intended not to force my inclinations, in favour of Mr. Solmes; and if they believe, that my going off was the effect of choice and premeditation.

I have no desire to be received to favour by them: For why should I sit down to wish for what I have no reason to expect?—Besides, I could not look them in the face, if they *would* receive me. Indeed I could not. All I have to hope for, is, first, that my father will absolve me from his heavy malediction: And next, for a last blessing. The obtaining of these favours are needful to my peace of mind.

I have written to my sister; but have only mentioned the absolution.

I am afraid, I shall receive a very harsh answer from her: My fault, in the eyes of my family, is of so enormous a nature, that my *first* application will hardly be encouraged. Then they know not (nor perhaps will believe), that I am so very ill as I am. So that, were I actually to die before they could have time to take the necessary informations, you must not blame them too severely. You must call it a Fatality. I know not what you must call it: For, alas! I have made them as miserable as I am myself. And yet sometimes I think, that, were they cheerfully to pronounce me forgiven, I know not whether my concern for having offended them would not be augmented: Since I imagine, that nothing can be more wounding to a spirit not ungenerous, than a generous *giveness*.

I hope your mamma will permit our correspondence for *one* month more, altho' I do not take her advice as to having this man. Only for *one* month. I will not defer it longer. When catastrophes are consummating, what changes

(a) See Vol. III. Letter L. p. 248.

changes (changes that make one's heart shudder to think of) may one short month produce!—But if she will not—why then, my dear, it becomes us both to acquiesce.

You can't think what my apprehensions would have been, had I known Mr. Hickman was to have had a meeting (on such a questioning occasion as must have been his errand from you) with that haughty and uncontrollable man.

You give me hope of a visit from him: Let him expect to see me greatly altered. I know he loves me: For he loves every-one whom you love! A painful interview, I doubt! But I shall be glad to see a man, whom you will one day, and an early day, I hope, make happy; and whose gentle manners, and unbounded love for you, will make you so, if it be not your own fault.

I am, my dearest, kindest friend, the sweet companion of my happy hours, the friend ever dearest and nearest to my fond heart,

Your equally obliged and faithful  
CLARISSA HARLOWE.

### LETTER LXVIII.

Mrs. NORTON, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Monday, July 24.

Excuse, my dearest young Lady, my long silence. I have been extremely ill. My poor boy has also been at death's door; and, when I hoped that he was better, he has relapsed. Alas! my dear, he is very dangerously ill. Let us both have your prayers!

Very angry letters have passed between your sister and Miss Howe. Every-one of your family is incensed against that young lady. I wish you would remonstrate against her warmth; since it can do no good; for they will not believe, but that her interposition has your countenance; nor that you are so ill as Miss Howe assures them you are.

Before she wrote, they were going to send up young Mr. Brand the clergyman, to make private inquiries of your health, and way of life—But now they are so exasperated, that they have laid aside their intention.

We have flying reports here, and at Harlowe-Place, of

some fresh insults which you have undergone: And that you are about to put yourself into Lady Betty Lawrence's protection. I believe they would now be glad (as I should be); that you would do so; and this, perhaps, will make them suspend for the present any determination in your favour.

How unhappy am I, that the dangerous way my son is in prevents my attendance on you! Let me beg of you to write me word how you are, both as to person and mind. A servant of Sir Robert Beachcroft, who rides post on his master's business to town, will present you with this; and, perhaps, will bring me the favour of a few lines in return. He will be obliged to stay in town several hours, for an answer to his dispatches.

This is the anniversary, that used to give joy to as many as had the pleasure and honour of knowing you. May the Almighty bless you, and grant, that it may be the only unhappy one that may be ever known by you, my dearest young Lady; and by

*Your ever-affectionate*

JUDITH NORTON.

## LETTER LXIX.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Mrs. NORTON.*

*Monday night, July 24.*

*My dear Mrs. NORTON,*

HAD I not fallen into fresh troubles, which disabled me for several days from holding a pen, I should not have forbore inquiring after your health, and that of your son; for I should have been but too ready to impute your own silence to the cause, to which, to my very great concern, I find it was owing. I pray to Heaven, my dear good friend, to give you comfort in the way most desirable to yourself.

I am exceedingly concerned at Miss Howe's writing about me to my friends. I do assure you, that I was as ignorant of her intention so to do, as of the contents of her letter. Nor has she yet let me know (discouraged, I suppose, by her ill success), that she *did* write. Impossible to share the delight which such charming spirits give,

*without*

without the inconvenience that will attend their volatility.—So mixed are our best enjoyments!

It was but yesterday that I wrote to chide the dear creature for freedoms of that nature, which her unseasonable love for me had made her take, as you wrote me word in your former. I was afraid, that all such freedoms would be attributed to *me*. And I am sure, that nothing but my own application to my friends, and a full conviction of my contrition, will procure me favour. Least of all can I expect, that either your mediation or hers (both of whose fond and partial love of me is so well known) will avail me.

She then gives a brief account of the arrest: Of her dejection under it: Of her apprehensions of being carried to her former lodgings: Of Mr. Lovelace's avowed innocence, as to that insult: Of her release, by Mr. Belford: Of Mr. Lovelace's promise not to molest her: Of her cloaths being sent her: Of the earnest desire of all his friends, and of himself, to marry her: Of Miss Howe's advice to comply with their requests: And, of her declared resolution rather to die, than be his, sent to Miss Howe, to be given to his relations, but as yesterday. After which, she thus proceeds:

Now, my dear Mrs. Norton, you will be surprised, perhaps, that I should have returned such an answer: But, when you have every thing before you, you, who know me so well, will not think me wrong. And, besides, I am upon a better preparation, than for an earthly husband.

Nor let it be imagined, my dear and ever-venerable friend, that my present turn of mind proceeds from gloominess or melancholy; for altho' it was *brought on* by disappointment (the world shewing me early, even at my first *rushing* into it, its true and ugly face); yet, I hope, that it has obtained a better root, and will every day more and more, by its fruits, demonstrate to me, and to all my friends, that it has.

I have written to my sister. Last Friday I wrote. So the dye is thrown. I hope for a gentle answer. But, perhaps, they will not vouchsafe me *any*. It is my *first* direct application, you know. I wish Miss Howe had left me to my own workings, in this tender point.

It will be a great satisfaction to me, to hear of your perfect recovery; and that my foster-brother is out of danger. But why said I, *out of danger*?—When can this be justly said of creatures, who hold by so uncertain a tenure?

nure? This is one of those forms of common speech, that proves the *frailty* and the *presumption* of poor mortals, at the same time.

Don't be uneasy you cannot answer your wishes to be with me. I am happier than I could have expected to be among mere strangers. It was grievous at first; but use reconciles every thing to us. The people of the house where I am, are courteous and honest. There is a widow who lodges in it (have I not said so formerly?), a good woman; who is the better for having been a proficient in the school of affliction.

An excellent school! my dear Mrs. Norton, in which we are taught to know ourselves, to be able to compassionate and bear with one another, and to look up to a better hope.

I have as humane a physician (whose fees are his least regard), and as worthy an apothecary, as ever patient was visited by. My nurse is diligent, obliging, silent, and sober. So I am not unhappy *without*: And *within*—I hope, my dear Mrs. Norton, that I shall be every day more and more happy *within*.

No doubt, it would be one of the greatest comforts I could know, to have you with me: You, who love me so dearly: Who have been the watchful sustainer of my helpless infancy: You, by whose precepts I have been so much benefited!—In your dear bosom could I repose all my griefs: And by your piety, and experience in the ways of Heaven, should I be strengthened in what I am still to go through.

But, as it must not be, I will acquiesce; and so, I hope, will you: For you see in what respects I am *not* unhappy; and in those that I *am*, they lie not in your power to remedy.

Then, as I have told you, I have all my cloaths in my own possession. So I am rich enough, as to this world, and in common conveniences.

So you see, my venerable and dear friend, that I am not always turning the dark side of my prospects, in order to move compassion; a trick imputed to me, too often, by my hard-hearted sister; when, if I know my own heart, it is above all trick or artifice. Yet I hope at last I shall be so happy, as to receive *benefit* rather than *reproach* from

from this talent, if it be my talent. At last, I say; for whose heart have I hitherto moved? — Not one, I am sure, that was not predetermined in my favour!

As to the day—I have passed it, as I ought to pass it—It has been a very heavy day to me!—More for my friends sake, too, than for my own!—How did they use to pass it!—What a Gala!—How have they now passed it!—To imagine it, how grievous!—Say not, that those are cruel, who suffer so much for my fault; and who, for eighteen years together, rejoiced in me, and rejoiced me, by their indulgent goodness!—But I will think the rest!—Adieu, my dearest Mrs. Norton!—Adieu!

## LETTER LXX.

Miss CL. HARLOWE, To Miss ARAB. HARLOWE.

Friday, July 21.

If, my dearest Sister, I did not think the state of my health very precarious, and that it was my duty to take this step, I should hardly have dared to approach you, altho' but with my pen, after having found your censures so dreadfully justified as they have been.

I have not the courage to write to my father himself; nor yet to my mother. And it is with trembling, that I address myself to you, to beg of you to intercede for me; that my father will have the goodness to revoke that heaviest part of the very heavy curse he laid upon me, which relates to HEREAFTER; For, as to the HERE, I have, indeed, met with my punishment from the very wretch in whom I was supposed to place my confidence.

As I hope not for restoration to favour, I may be allowed to be very earnest on this head: Yet will I not use any arguments in support of my request, because I am sure my father cannot wish to have his poor child miserable for ever!

I have the most grateful sense of my mother's goodness in sending me up my cloaths. I would have acknowledged the favour the moment I received them, with the most thankful duty, but that I feared any line from me would be unacceptable.

I would not give fresh offence: So will decline all other commendations of duty and love; appealing to my heart

for both, where both are flaming with an ardour that nothing but death can extinguish: Therefore only subscribe myself, without so much as a name,

*My dear and happy Sister,*

*Your afflicted Servant.*

A letter directed for me, at Mr. Smith's, a glover, in King-street, Covent-garden, will come to hand.

## LETTER LXXI.

Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

[In answer to his Letters, Num. LIV. LVII.]

*Edgware, Monday, July 24.*

WHAT pains thou takest to persuade thyself, that the lady's ill health is owing to the vile arrest, and to her friends implacableness! Both, primarily (if they were), to be laid at thy door. What poor excuses will good heads make for the evils they are put upon by bad hearts! — But 'tis no wonder, that he who can sit down premeditatedly to do a bad action, will content himself with a bad excuse: And yet, what fools must he suppose the rest of the world to be, if he imagines them as easily to be imposed upon, as he can impose upon himself?

In vain dost thou impute to pride or wilfulness the necessity to which thou hast reduced this lady of parting with her cloaths: For can she do otherwise, and be the noble-minded creature she is?

Her implacable friends have refused her the current cash she left behind her; and wished, as her sister wrote to her, to see her reduced to want: Probably therefore they will not be sorry that she is reduced to such straits; and will take it for a justification from Heaven of their wicked hard-heartedness. Thou canst not suppose she would take supplies from thee: To take them from me would, in her opinion, be taking them from thee. Miss Howe's mother is an avaritious woman; and, perhaps, the daughter could do nothing of that sort unknown to her; and, if she could, is too noble a girl to deny it, if charged. And then Miss Harlowe is firmly of opinion, that she shall never want nor wear the things she disposes of.

Having heard nothing from town that obliges me to go thither, I shall gratify poor Belton with my company till

to-morrow, or perhaps till Wednesday : For the unhappy man is more and more loth to part with me. I shall soon set out for Epsom, to endeavour to serve him there, and reinstate him in his own house. Poor fellow ! he is most horribly low-spirited ; mopes about ; and nothing diverts him. I pity him at my heart ; but can do him no good.—What consolation can I give him, either from his past life, or from his future prospects ?

Our friendships and intimacies, Lovelace, are only calculated for strong life and health. When sickness comes, we look round us, and upon one another, like frightened birds, at the sight of a kite ready to souse upon them. Then, with all our bravery, what miserable wretches are we !

Thou tellest me, that thou seek reformation is coming swiftly upon me. I hope it is. I see so much difference in the behaviour of this admirable woman in *her* illness, and that of poor Belton in *his*, that it is plain to me, the sinner is the real coward, and the saint the true hero ; and, sooner or later, we shall all find it to be so, if we are not cut off suddenly.

The lady shut herself up at six o'clock yesterday afternoon, and intends not to see company till seven or eight this ; not even her nurse ; imposing upon herself a severe fast. And why ? It is her birth-day ! — Blooming, yet declining in her blossom ! — Every birth-day till this, no doubt, happy ! — What must be her reflections ! — What ought to be thine !

What sport dost thou make with my aspirations, and my prostrations, as thou callest them ; and with my dropping of the bank-note behind her chair. I had too much awe of her at the time, and too much apprehended her displeasure at the offer, to make it with the grace that would better have become my intention. But the action, if awkward, was modest. Indeed, the fitter subject for ridicule with thee ; who canst no more taste the beauty and delicacy of modest obligingness, than of modest love. For the same may be said of inviolable respect, that the poet says of unfeigned affection.

I speak, I know not what ! —

Speak ever so ; and if I answer you

I know not what, it shews the more of love.

Love is a child that talks in broken language ;

Yet then it speaks most plain.

The like may be pleaded in behalf of that modest respect, which made the humble offerer afraid to invade the awful eye, or the revered hand; but awkwardly to drop its incense beside the altar it should have been laid upon. But how should that soul, which could treat delicacy itself brutally, know any thing of this?

But I am still more amazed at thy courage, to think of throwing thyself in the way of Miss Howe, and Miss Arabella Harlowe! — Thou wilt not dare, surely, to carry this thought into execution!

As to *my* dress, and *tby* dress, I have only to say, That the sum total of thy observation is this: That *my* outside is the *worst* of me; and *thine* the *best* of thee: And what gettest thou by the comparison? Do thou reform the one, and I'll try to mend the other. I challenge thee to begin.

Mrs. Lovick gave me, at my request, the copy of a meditation she shewed me, which was extracted by the lady from the Scriptures, while under arrest at Rowland's, as appears by the date. She is not to know, that she has taken such a liberty.

You and I always admired the noble simplicity, and natural ease and dignity of style, which are the distinguishing characteristics of these books, whenever any passages from them, by way of quotation in the works of other authors, popt upon us. And once I remember you, even *you*, observed, that those passages always appeared to you like a rich vein of golden ore, which runs thro' baser metals; embellishing the work they were brought to authenticate.

Try, Lovelace, if thou canst relish a divine beauty, I think it must strike transient (if not permanent) remorse into thy heart. Thou boastest of thy ingenuity; let this be the test of it; and whether thou canst be serious on a subject so deep, the occasion of it resulting from thyself.

#### M E D I T A T I O N.

Saturday, July 15.

*O That my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balance together!*

*For now it would be heavier than the sand of the sea:*  
*Therefore my words are swallowed up.*

*For the arrows of the Almighty are within me; the poison whereof*

whereof drinketh up my spirit. The terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.

When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise? When will the night be gone? And I am full of tossings to and fro, unto the dawning of the day.

My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope—Mine eye shall no more see good.

Wherefore is light given to her that is in misery; and life unto the bitter in soul?

Who longeth for death; but it cometh not; and diggeth for it more than for hid treasures?

Why is light given to one whose way is hid; and whom God hath hedged in?

For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me!

I was not in safety; neither had I rest; neither was I quiet: Yet trouble came.

O that my words were now written! O that they were printed in a book! that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the book for ever!

I have a little leisure, and am in a scribbling vein: Indulge me, Lovelace, a few reflections on these sacred books.

We are taught to read the Bible, when children, and as a rudiment only; and, as far as I know, this may be the reason, why we think ourselves above it, when at a maturer age. For, you know, that our parents, as well as we, wisely rate our proficiency by the books we are advanced to, and not by our understanding what we have passed through. But, in my uncle's illness, I had the curiosity, in some of my dull hours (lighting upon one in his closet), to dip into it: And then I found, where-ever I turned, that there were admirable things in it. I have borrowed one, on receiving from Mrs. Lovick the above meditations; for I had a mind to compare them by the book, hardly believing they could be so exceedingly opposite as I find they are. And one time or other, it is very likely, that I shall make a resolution to give it a thorough perusal, by way of course, as I may say.

This, mean time, I will venture to repeat, is certain, that the style is that truly easy, simple, and natural one, which we should admire in other authors excessively. Then all the world join in an opinion of its antiquity, and authenticity.

thenticity too ; and the Learned are fond of strengthening their different arguments by its sanctions. Indeed, I was so much taken with it at my uncle's, that I was half ashamed that it appeared so new to me. And yet, I cannot but say, that I have some of the Old Testament history, as it is called, in my head : But, perhaps, am more obliged for it to Josephus, than to the Bible itself.

Odd enough, with all our pride of learning, that we choose to derive the little we know from the under-currents, perhaps muddy ones too, when the clear, the perfectly lucid fountain-head is much nearer at hand, and easier to be come at — Slighted the more, possibly, for that very reason !

But man is a pragmatical foolish creature; and the more we look into him, the more we must despise him.—Lords of the creation ! — Who can forbear indignant laughter ! When we see not one of the individuals of that creation, except his perpetually eccentric self, but acts within his own natural and original appointments : And all the time, proud and vain as the conceited wretch is of fancied and self-dependent excellence, he is obliged not only for the ornaments, but for the necessaries of life, (that is to say, for food as well as raiment) to all the other creatures ; strutting with their blood and spirits in his veins, and with their plumage on his back : For what has he of his own, but a very mischievous, monkey-like, bad nature ? Yet thinks himself at liberty to kick, and cuff, and elbow out every worthier creature : And when he has none of the animal creation to hunt down and abuse, will make use of his power, his strength, or his wealth, to oppress the less powerful and weaker of his own species !

When you and I meet next, let us enter more largely into this subject : And, I dare say, we shall take it by turns, in imitation of the two sages of antiquity, to laugh and to weep at the thoughts of what miserable, yet conceited beings men in general, but we libertines in particular, are.

I fell upon a piece at Dorrell's this very evening, intitled, *The sacred Classics*, written by one Blackwall.

I took it home with me ; and had not read a dozen pages, when I was convinced, that I ought to be ashamed of myself to think, how greatly I have admired less noble and less

ies natural beauties in pagan authors; while I have known nothing of this all-excelling collection of beauties, the Bible! By my faith, Lovelace, I shall for the future have a better opinion of the good sense and taste of half a score parsons, whom I have fallen in with in my time, and despised for magnifying, as I thought they did, the language and the sentiments to be found in it, in preference to all the antient poets and philosophers. And this is now a convincing proof to me, and shames as much an infidel's presumption as his ignorance, that those who know least, are the greatest scoffers. A pretty pack of would-be-wits of us, who censure without knowledge, laugh without reason, and are most noisy and loud against things we know least of!

## LETTER LXXII.

Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

Wednesday, July 26.

I Came not to town till this morning early; poor Belton clinging to me, as a man destitute of all other hold.

I hastened to Smith's; and had but a very indifferent account of the lady's health. I sent up my compliments; and she desired to see me in the afternoon.

Mrs. Lovick told me, that, after I went away on Saturday, she actually parted with one of her best suits of cloaths, to a gentlewoman who is her (Mrs. Lovick's) benefactress, and who bought them for a niece who is very speedily to be married, and whom she fits out and portions as her intended heiress. The lady was so jealous that the money might come from you or me, that she would see the purchaser: Who owned to Mrs. Lovick, that she bought them for half their worth: But yet, tho' her conscience permitted her to take them at such an under-rate, the widow says, her friend admired the lady, as one of the loveliest of her sex: And having been let into a little of her story, could not help tears at taking away her purchase.

She may be a good sort of woman: Mrs. Lovick says, she is: But SELF is an odious devil, that reconciles to some people the most cruel and dishonest actions. But, nevertheless, it is my opinion, that those who can suffer themselves to take advantage of the necessities of their fellow-

fellow-creatures, in order to buy any thing at a less rate than would allow them the legal interest of their purchase-money (supposing they purchase *before they want*), are no better than robbers for the difference. — To plunder a wreck, and to rob at a fire, are indeed higher degrees of wickedness : But do not these as well as the others heighten the distresses of the distressed, and heap more misery on the miserable, whom it is the duty of every one to relieve ?

About three o'clock I went again to Smith's. The lady was writing when I sent up my name ; but admitted of my visit. I saw a visible alteration in her countenance for the worse ; and Mrs. Lovick respectfully accusing her of too great assiduity to her pen, early and late, and of her abstinence the day before, I took notice of the alteration ; and told her, that her physician had greater hopes of her, than she had of herself ; and I would take the liberty to say, that despair of recovery allowed not room for cure.

She said, She neither despaired nor hoped. Then stepping to the glass, with great composure, My countenance, says she, is indeed an honest picture of my heart. But the mind will run away with the body at any time.

Writing is all my diversion, continued she ; and I have subjects that cannot be dispensed with. As to my hours, I have always been an early riser : But now Rest is less in my power than ever : Sleep has a long time ago quarrelled with me, and will not be friends, altho' I have made the first advances. What will be, must.

She then stept to her closet, and brought to me a parcel sealed up with three seals : Be so kind, said she, as to give This to your friend. A very grateful present it ought to be to him : For, Sir, this packet contains all his letters to me. Such letters they are, as, compared with his actions, would reflect dishonour upon all his Sex, were they to fall into other hands.

As to my letters to him, they are not many. He may either keep or destroy them, as he pleases.

I thought I ought not to forego this opportunity to plead for you : I therefore, with the packet in my hand, urged all the arguments I could think of in your favour.

She heard me out with more attention than I could have promised myself, considering her determin'd resolution.

I would not interrupt you, Mr. Belford, said she, tho' I am far from being pleased with the subject of your discourse. The motives for your pleas in his favour, are generous. I love to see instances of generous friendship in either Sex. But I have written my full mind on this subject to Miss Howe, who will communicate it to the ladies of his family. No more, therefore, I pray you, upon a topic that may lead to disagreeable recriminations.

Her apothecary came in. He advised her to the air, and blamed her for so great an application, as he was told she made, to her pen; and he gave it as the Doctor's opinion, as well as his own, that she would recover, if she herself desired to recover, and would use the means.

The lady may indeed write too much for her health, perhaps: But I have observed on several occasions, that when the physical men are at a loss what to prescribe, they forbid their patients what they best like, and are most diverted with.

But, noble-minded as they see this lady is, they know not half her nobleness of mind, nor how deeply she is wounded; and depend too much upon her *youth*, which I doubt will not do in this case, and upon *time*, which will not alleviate the woes of such a mind: For, having been bent upon doing good, and upon reclaiming a libertine whom she loved, she is disappointed in all her darling views, and will never be able, I fear, to look up with satisfaction enough in herself to make life desirable to her. For this lady had *other* views in living, than the common ones of eating, sleeping, dressing, visiting, and those other fashionable amusements, which fill up the time of most of her Sex, especially of those of it, who think themselves fitted to shine in and adorn polite assemblies. Her grief, in short, seems to me to be of such a nature, that *time*, which alleviates most other persons afflictions, will, as the poet says, *give increase to hers*.

"Thou, Lovelace, mightest have seen all this superior excellency, as thou wentest along. In every word, in every sentiment, in every action, is it visible. —But thy cursed inventions and intriguing spirit ran away with thee. 'Tis fit that the subject of thy wicked boast, and of talents so egregiously misapplied, should be thy punishment and thy curse."

Mr.

Mr. Goddard took his leave ; and I was going to do so too, when the maid came up, and told her, a gentleman was below, who very earnestly inquired after her health, and desired to see her : His name Hickman.

She was overjoyed ; and bid the maid desire the gentleman to walk up.

I would have withdrawn ; but, I suppose, she thought it was likely I should have met him upon the stairs, and so she forbid it.

She shot to the stairs-head to receive him, and, taking his hand, asked half a dozen questions (without waiting for any answer) in relation to Miss Howe's health, acknowledging, in high terms, her goodness in sending him to see her, before she set out upon her little journey.

He gave her a letter from that young lady ; which she put into her bosom, saying, She would read it by-and-by.

He was visibly shocked to see how ill she looked.

You look at me with concern, Mr. Hickman, said she—Oh! Sir, times are strangely alter'd with me, since I saw you last at my dear Miss Howe's !—What a cheerful creature was I then !—My heart at rest ! My prospects charming ! And beloved by every-body !—But I will not pain you !

Indeed, Madam, said he, I am grieved for you at my soul.

He turned away his face with visible grief in it.

Her own eyes glisten'd : But she turned to each of us, presenting one to the other : Him to me, as a gentleman truly deserving to be called so ; Me to him, as your friend, indeed [How was I, at that instant, ashamed of myself !], but, nevertheless, as a man of humanity ; detesting my friend's baseness ; and desirous of doing her all manner of good offices.

Mr. Hickman received my civilities with a coldness, which, however, was rather to be expected on your account, than that it deserved exception on mine. And the lady invited us both to breakfast with her in the morning ; he being obliged to return next day.

I left them together, and called upon Mr. Dorrell, my attorney, to consult him upon poor Belton's affairs ; and then went home, and wrote thus far, preparative to what may occur in my breakfasting-visit in the morning.

LETTER LXXIII.

Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

Thursday, July 27.

I Went this morning, according to the lady's invitation, to breakfast, and found Mr. Hickman with her.

A good deal of heaviness and concern hung upon his countenance; but he received me with more respect than he did yesterday; which, I presume, was owing to the lady's favourable character of me.

He spoke very little; for I suppose they had all their talk out yesterday and before I came this morning.

By the hints that dropped, I perceived that Miss Howe's letter gave an account of your interview with her at Col. Ambrose's—of your professions to Miss Howe; and Miss Howe's opinion, that marrying you was the only way now left to repair her wrongs.

Mr. Hickman, as I also gathered, had press'd her, in Miss Howe's name, to let her find her, on her return from the Isle of Wight, at a neighbouring farm-house, where neat apartments would be made ready to receive her. She asked, How long it would be before they returned? And he told her, It was proposed to be no more than a fortnight out and in. Upon which, she said, She should then perhaps have time to consider of that kind proposal.

He had tender'd her money from Miss Howe; but could not induce her to take any. No wonder I was refused! She only said, That, if she had occasion, she would be obliged to no-body but Miss Howe.

Mr. Goddard, her apothecary, came in before breakfast was over. At her desire he sat down with us. Mr. Hickman asked him, If he could give him any consolation in relation to Miss Harlowe's recovery, to carry down to a lady, who loved her as she loved her own life?

The lady, said he, will do very well, if she will resolve upon it herself. Indeed you *will*, Madam. The Doctor is intirely of this opinion; and has ordered nothing for you, but weak jellies, and innocent cordials, lest you should starve yourself. And, let me tell you, Madam, that so much watching, so little nourishment, and so much grief,

grief, as you seem to indulge, is enough to impair the most vigorous health, and to wear out the strongest constitution.

What, Sir, said she, can I do? I have no appetite. Nothing you call nourishing will stay on my stomach. I do what I can: And have such kind directors in Dr. H. and you, that I should be inexcusable if I did not.

I'll give you a regimen, Madam, replied he; which, I am sure, the Doctor will approve of, and will make physic unnecessary in your case. And that is, ' Go to bed at ten at night. Rise not till seven in the morning. Let your breakfast be water-gruel, or milk-pottage, or weak broths: Your dinner any thing you like, so you will *but eat*: A dish of tea, with milk, in the afternoon; and sagoe for your supper: And, my life for yours, this diet, and a month's country-air, will set you up.'

We were much pleased with the worthy gentleman's disinterested regimen: And she said, referring to her nurse (who vouched for her), Pray, Mr. Hickman, let Miss Howe know the good hands I am in: And as to the kind charge of the gentleman, assure her, that all I promised to her, in the longest of my two last letters, on the subject of my health, I do and will, to the utmost of my power, observe. I have engaged, Sir (to Mr. Goddard), I have engaged, Sir (to me), to Miss Howe, to avoid all wilful neglects. It would be an unpardonable fault, and very ill become the character I would be glad to deserve, or the temper of mind I wish my friends hereafter to think me mistress of, if I did not.

Mr. Hickman and I went afterwards to a neighbouring coffee-house; and he gave me some account of your behaviour at the Ball on Monday night, and of your treatment of him in the conference he had with you before that; which he represented in a more favourable light than you had done yourself: And yet he gave his sentiments of you with great freedom, but with the politeness of a gentleman.

He told me how very determined the lady was against marrying you; that she had, early this morning, set herself to write a letter to Miss Howe, in answer to one he brought her, which he was to call for at twelve, it being

almost finished before he saw her at breakfast; and that at three he proposed to set out on his return.

He told me, that Miss Howe, and her mother, and himself, were to begin their little journey for the Isle of Wight on Monday next: But that he must make the most favourable representation of Miss Harlowe's bad health, or they should have a very uneasy absence. He expressed the pleasure he had in finding the lady in such good hands: Proposed to call on Dr. H. to take his opinion, whether it was likely she would recover; and hoped he should find it favourable.

As he was resolved to make the best of the matter, and as the lady had refused to accept of money offered by Mr. Hickman, I said nothing of her parting with her cloaths. I thought it would serve no other end to mention it, but to shock Miss Howe: For it has such a sound with it, that a lady of her rank and fortune should be so reduced, that I cannot myself think of it with patience; nor know I but *one* man in the world who can.

This gentleman is a little finical and formal; but I think him an agreeable sensible man, and not at all deserving of the treatment, or the character, you give him.

But you are really a strange mortal: Because you have advantages in your person, in your air, and intellect, above all the men I know, and a face that would deceive the devil, you can't think any man else tolerable.

It is upon this modest principle that thou deridest some of us, who, not having thy confidence in their outside appearance, seek to hide their defects by the taylor's and peruke-maker's assistance [Mistakenly enough, if it be really done so absurdly as to expose them more]; and sayst, That we do but hang out a sign, in our dress, of what we have in the shop of our minds. This, no doubt, thou thinkest, is smartly observed: But pr'ythee, Lovelace, tell me, if thou canst, What sort of a sign must thou hang out, wert thou obliged to give us a clear idea, by it, of the furniture of *thy* mind?

Mr. Hickman tells me, He should have been happy with Miss Howe some weeks ago (for all the settlements have been some time engrossed); but that she will not marry, she declares, while her dear friend is so unhappy.

This

This is truly a charming instance of the force of *female* friendship ; which you and I, and our brother rakes, have constantly ridiculed as a chimerical and impossible thing, in ladies of equal age, rank, and perfections.

But really, Lovelace, I see more and more, that there are not in the world, with all our conceited pride, narrower-soul'd wretches than we Rakes and Libertines are. And I'll tell thee how it comes about.

Our early love of roguery makes us generally run away from instruction ; and so we become mere smatterers in the sciences we are put to learn ; and, because we *will* know no more, think there is no more to be known.

With an infinite deal of vanity, un-reined imaginations, and no judgments at all, we next commence *half-with*, and then think we have the whole field of knowledge in possession, and despise every one who takes more pain, and is more serious, than ourselves, as phlegmatic stupid fellows, who have no taste for the most poignant pleasures of life.

This makes us insufferable to men of modesty and merit, and obliges us to herd with those of our own cast ; and by this means we have no opportunities of seeing or conversing with any-body who could or would shew us what we are ; and so we conclude, that we are the cleverest fellows in the world, and the only men of spirit in it ; and, looking down with supercilious eyes on all who give not themselves the liberties we take, imagine the world made for us, and for us only.

Thus, as to useful knowledge, while others go to the bottom, we only skim the surface ; are despised by people of solid sense, of true honour, and superior talents ; and, shutting our eyes, move round and round (like so many blind mill horses) in one narrow circle, while we imagine we have all the world to range in.

I THREW myself in Mr. Hickman's way, on his return from the lady ; and we took a small repast, at the Lebeck's Head in Chandos-street.

He was excessively moved at taking leave of her, being afraid, as he said to me, tho' he would not tell her so) that he should never see her again. She charged him

to represent every-thing to Miss Howe in the most favourable light that the truth would bear.

He told me of a tender passage at parting; which was, that having saluted her at her closet-door, he could not help once more taking the same liberty, in a more fervent manner, at the stairs-head, whither she accompanied him; and this in the thought, that it was the last time he should ever have that honour; and offering to apologize for his freedom (for he had press'd her to his heart with a vehemence, that he could neither account for or resist)—Excuse you, Mr. Hickman! that I will: You are my brother, and my friend: And to shew you, that the good man, who is to be happy with my beloved Miss Howe, is very dear to me, you shall carry to her this token of my love (offering her sweet face to his salute, and pressing his hand between hers); and perhaps her love of *me* will make it more agreeable to her, than her punctilio would otherwise allow it to be: And tell her, said he, dropping on one knee, with clasped hands, and uplifted eyes, that in this posture you see me, in the last moment of our parting, begging a blessing upon you both, and that you may be the delight and comfort of each other, for many, very many, happy years!

Tears, said he, fell from my eyes: I even sobb'd with mingled joy and sorrow; and she retreating as soon as I raised her, I went down stairs, highly dissatisfied with myself for going; yet unable to stay, my eyes fixed the contrary way to my feet, as long as I could behold the skirts of her raiment.

I went into the back-shop, continued the worthy man, and recommended the angelic lady to the best care of Mrs. Smith; and, when I was in the street, cast my eye up at her window: There, for the last time, I doubt, said he, that I shall ever behold her, I saw her; and she waved her charming hand to me, and with such a look of smiling goodness, and mingled concern, as I cannot describe.

Prythee tell me, thou vile Lovelace, if thou hast not a notion, even from these jejune descriptions of mine (as I have from reflecting upon the occasion), that there must be a more exalted pleasure in intellectual friendship, than ever thou couldst taste in the grosser fumes of sensuality? And whether it may not be possible for thee, in time, to

give that preference to the *infinitely* preferable, which I hope, now, that I shall always give?

I will leave thee to make the most of this reflection, from

*Thy true friend,*

J. BELFORD.

## LETTER LXXIV.

*Miss Howe, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.*

Tuesday, July 25.

YOUR two affecting letters were brought to me (as I had directed any letter from you should be), to the Colonel's, about an hour before we broke up. I could not forbear dipping into them there; and shedding more tears over them than I will tell you of; altho' I dried my eyes, as well as I could, that the company I was obliged to return to, and my mamma, should see as little of my concern as possible.

I am yet (and was then still more) excessively flutter'd. The occasion I will communicate to you by-and-by: For nothing but the flutters given by the stroke of death could divert my *first* attention from the sad and solemn contents of your last favour. These therefore I must begin with.

How can I bear the thoughts of losing so dear a friend? I will not so much as suppose it. Indeed I *cannot!* Such a mind as yours was not vested in humanity, to be snatch'd away from us so soon. There must be still a great deal for you to do, for the good of all who have the happiness to know you.

You enumerate, in your letter of Thursday last (*a*), the particulars in which your situation is already mended: Let me see, by effects, that you are in earnest in that enumeration; and that you really have the courage to resolve to get above the sense of injuries you could not avoid; and then will I trust to Providence, and my humble prayers, for your perfect recovery: And glad at my heart shall I be, on my return from the little Island, to find you well enough to be near us, according to the proposal Mr. Hickman has to make you.

You chide me, in yours of Sunday, on the freedom I take with your friends (*b*).

(*a*) Letter L. p. 194.

(*b*) See p. 242.

I may be warm. I know I am.—Too warm.—Yet warmth in friendship, surely, cannot be a crime; especially when our friend has great merit, labours under oppression, and is struggling with undeserved calamity.

I have no notion of coldness in friendship, be it dignified or distinguished by the name of prudence, or what it will.

You may excuse your relations. It was ever your way to do so. But, my dear, other people must be allowed to judge as they please. I am not their daughter, nor the sister of your brother and sister—I thank Heaven, I am not.

But if you are displeased with me, for the freedoms I took so long ago, as you mention, I am afraid, if you knew what passed upon an application I made to your sister, very lately, to procure you the absolution your heart is so much set upon, that you would be still more concerned. But they have been even with me. But I must not tell you all. I hope however, that these *unforgivers* (my mother is among them) were always good, dutiful, passive children to their parents.

Once more, forgive me. I owned I was too warm. But I have no example to the contrary, but from You: And the treatment you meet with, is very little encouragement to me, to endeavour to imitate you in your dutiful meekness.

You leave it to me, to give a negative to the hopes of the noble family, whose only disgrace is, that so very vile a man is so nearly related to them. But yet—Alas! my dear, I am so fearful of consequences, so *selfishly* fearful, if this negative *must* be given—I don't know what I should say—But give me leave to suspend, however, this negative, till I hear from you again.

Their earnest courtship of you into their splendid family is so *very* honourable to you—They *so justly* admire you—You must have had such a *noble triumph* over the base man—He is so *much* in earnest—The world knows so *much* of the unhappy affair—You may do *still* so *much* good—Your will is *so* inviolate—Your relations are *so* implacable—Think, my dear, and *re-think*.

And let me leave you to do so, while I give you the occasion of the flutter I mentioned at the beginning of this letter; in the conclusion of which, you will find the ob-

ligation I have consented to lay myself under, to refer this important point once more to your discussion, before I give, in your name, the negative that cannot, when given, be with honour to yourself repented of or recalled.

Know then, my dear, that I accompanied my mother to Colonel Ambrose's, on the occasion I mentioned to you in my former. Many ladies and gentlemen were there, whom you know; particularly Miss Kitty D'Oily, Miss Lloyd, Miss Biddy D'Ollyffe, Miss Biddulph, and their respective admirers, with the Colonel's two nieces, fine women both; besides many whom you know not; for they were strangers to me, but by name. A splendid company, and all pleased with one another, till Colonel Ambrose introduced one, who, the moment he was brought into the great hall, set the whole assemblée into a kind of agitation.

It was your villain.

I thought I should have funk, as soon as I set my eyes upon him. My mother was also affected; and, coming to me, Nancy, whisper'd she, can you bear the sight of that wretch without too much emotion? — If not, withdraw into the next apartment.

I could not remove. Every-body's eyes were glanced from him to me. I sat down, and fann'd myself, and was forced to order a glass of water. O that I had the eye the basilisk is reported to have, thought I, and that his life were within the power of it—directly would I kill him!

He entered with an air so hateful to me, but so agreeable to every other eye, that I could have look'd him dead for that too.

After the general salutations, he singled out Mr. Hickman, and told him, He had recollect'd some parts of his behaviour to him when he saw him last, which had made him think himself under obligation to his patience and politeness.

And so, indeed, he was.

Miss D'Oily, upon his complimenting her, among a knot of ladies, asked him, in their hearing, How Miss Clarissa Harlowe did?

He heard, he said, you were not so well as he wished you to be, and as you deserved to be.

O Mr. Lovelace, said she, what have you to answer for, on that young lady's account, if all be true that I have heard?

I have a great deal to answer for, said the unblushing villain: But that dear lady has so many excellencies, and so much delicacy, that little sins are great ones in her eye.

*Little sins!* reply'd the lady: Mr. Lovelace's character is so well known, that no-body believes he can commit little sins.

You are very good to me, Miss D'Oily.

Indeed I am not.

Then I am the only person to whom you are *not* very good: And so I am the less obliged to you.

He turned, with an unconcerned air, to Miss Playford, and made her some genteel compliments. I believe you know her not. She visits his cousins Montague. Indeed, he had something in his specious manner to say to everybody: And this too soon quieted the disgust each person had at his entrance.

I still kept my seat, and he either saw me not, or would not yet see me; and addressing himself to my mother, taking her unwilling hand, with an air of high assurance, I am glad to see you here, Madam: I hope Miss Howe is well. I have reason to complain greatly of her: But hope to owe to her the highest obligations that can be laid on man.

My daughter, Sir, is accustomed to be too warm and too zealous in her friendships for either my tranquillity, or her own.

There had indeed been some late occasion given for mutual displeasure between my mother and me: But I think she might have spared this to *him*; tho' no-body heard it, I believe, but the person to whom it was spoken and the lady who told it to me; for my mother spoke it low.

We are not wholly, Madam, to live for ourselves, said the vile hypocrite. It is not every-one who has a soul capable of friendship: And what a heart must that be, which can be insensible to the interests of a suffering friend?

This sentiment from Mr. Lovelace's mouth, said my mother! — Forgive me, Sir; But you can have no end, surely, in endeavouring to make *me* think as well of you,

as some innocent creatures have thought of you, to their cost.

She would have flung from him. But, detaining her hand—Less severe, dear Madam, said he, be less severe, in *this* place, I beseech you. You will allow, that a very faulty person may see his errors ; and when he does, and owns them, and repents, should he not be treated mercifully ?

Your air, Sir, seems not to be that of a penitent. But the place may as properly excuse this subject, as what you call my severity.

But, dearest Madam, permit me to say, that I hope for your interest with your charming daughter (was his sycophant word) to have it put into my power to convince all the world, that there never was a truer penitent. And why, why this anger, dear Madam (for she struggled to get her hand out of his) ; these violent airs, so *maidenly!*—Impudent fellow !—May I not ask, if Miss Howe be here ?

She would not have been here, replied my mother, had she known whom she had been to see.

And is she here, then ?—Thank Heaven !—He disengaged her hand, and stept forward into company.

Dear Miss Lloyd, said he, with an air, (taking her hand, as he quitted my mother's) tell me, tell me, is Miss Arabella Harlowe here ? Or will she be here ? I was informed she would : And this, and the opportunity of paying my compliments to your friend Miss Howe, were great inducements with me to attend the Colonel.

Superlative assurance ! Was it not, my dear ?

Miss Arabella Harlowe, excuse me, Sir, said Miss Lloyd, would be very little inclined to meet you here, or any-where else.

Perhaps so, my dear Miss Lloyd : But, perhaps, for that very reason, I am more desirous to see *her*.

Miss Harlowe, Sir, said Miss Biddulph, with a threatening air, will hardly be here without her *brother*. I imagine, if one come, both will come.

Heaven grant they both may ! said the wretch. Nothing, Miss Biddulph, shall begin from me to disturb this assemblée, I assure you, if they do. One calm half-hour's conversation with that brother and sister, would be a most fortunate

fortunate opportunity to me, in presence of the Colonel and his Lady, or whom else they should choose.

Then turning round, as if desirous to find out the one or the other, or both, he spied me, and, with a very low bow, approached me.

I was all in a flutter, you may suppose. He would have taken my hand. I refused it, all glowing with indignation : Every-body's eyes upon us.

I went from him to the other end of the room, and sat down, as I thought out of his hated sight : But presently I heard his odious voice, whispering, behind my chair (he leaning upon the back of it, with impudent unconcern) *Charming Miss Howe!* looking over my shoulder : *One request*—I started up from my seat, but could hardly stand neither, for very indignation—O this sweet, but becoming, disdain, whisper'd on the insufferable creature ! — I am sorry to give you all this emotion : But either here, or at your own house, let me intreat from you one quarter of an hour's audience. — I beseech you, Madam, but one quarter of an hour, in any of the adjoining apartments.

Not for a kingdom, fluttering my fan.—I knew not what I did.—But I could have killed him.

We are so much observed—Else on my knees, my dear Miss Howe, would I beg your interest with your charming friend.

She'll have nothing to say to you.

I had not then your letters, my dear.

Killing words !—But indeed I have deserved them, and a dagger in my heart besides.—I am so conscious of my demerits, that I have no hope, but in *your* interposition— Could I owe that favour to Miss Howe's mediation, which I cannot hope for on any other account —

My mediation, vilest of men !—My mediation !—I abhor you !—From my soul, I abhor you, vilest of men !—Three or four times I repeated these words, stammering too.—I was excessively flutter'd.

You can call me nothing, Madam, so bad as I will call myself.—I *have* been, indeed, the vilest of men.—But now I am not so.—Permit me (Every-body's eyes upon us) but one moment's audience—To exchange but ten words with you, dearest Miss Howe—in whose presence

you please—for your dear friend's sake—but ten words with you in the next apartment.

It is an insult upon me, to presume, that I would exchange one with you, if I could help it!—Out of my way, and my right, fellow!

And away I would have flung: But he took my hand. I was excessively disordered.—Every-body's eyes more and more intent upon us.

Mr. Hickman, whom my mother had drawn on one side, to injoin him a patience, which, perhaps, need not to have been inforced, came up just then, with my mother, who had him by his leading-strings—By his sleeve, I should say.

Mr. Hickman, said the bold wretch, be my advocate but for ten words in the next apartment with Miss Howe, in your presence, and in yours, Madam, to my mother.

Hear, Nancy, what he has to say to you. To get rid of him, hear his *ten words*.

Excuse me, Madam. His very breath—Unhand me, Sir!

He figh'd, and look'd—O how the practised villain figh'd and look'd! He then let go my hand, with such a reverence in his manner, as brought blame upon me from some, that I would not hear him.—And this incensed me the more. O my dear, this man is a devil!—This man is indeed a devil!—So much patience, when he pleases! So much gentleness!—Yet so resolute, so persisting, so audacious!

I was going out of the assemblée in great disorder. He was at the door as soon as I.

How kind this is! said the wretch; and, ready to follow me, open'd the door for me.

I turned back, upon this, and, not knowing what I did, snapp'd my fan just in his face, as he turned short upon me; and the powder flew from his wig.

Every-body seemed as much pleased, as I was vexed.

He turned to Mr. Hickman, nettled at the powder flying, and at the smiles of the company upon him; Mr. Hickman, you will be one of the happiest men in the world, because you are a *good* man, and will do nothing to provoke this passionate lady; and because she has too much good sense to be provoked without reason: But else, the Lord have mercy upon you!

This man, this Mr. Hickman, my dear, is too meek for a man.

a man. Indeed he is.—But my patient mother twits me, that her passionate daughter ought to like him *the better* for that. But meek men abroad are not always meek men at home. I have observed that, in more instances than one: And if they *were*, I should not, I verily think, like them the better for being so.

He then turned to my mother, resolved to be even with her too: Where, good Madam, could Miss get all this spirit?

The company round smiled; for I need not tell you, that my mother's high-spiritedness is pretty well known; and she, sadly vexed, said, Sir, you treat me, as you do the rest of the world—But—

I beg pardon, Madam, interrupted he: I might have spared my question—And instantly (I retiring to the other end of the hall) he turned to Miss Playford: What would I give, Miss, to hear you sing that song you obliged us with at Lord M.'s?

He then, as if nothing had happened, fell into a conversation with her, and Miss D'Ollyffe, upon music; and whisperingly sung to Miss Playford, holding her two hands, with such airs of genteel unconcern, that it vexed me not a little, to look round, and see how pleased half the giddy fools of our Sex were with him, notwithstanding his notorious wicked character.—To this it is, that such vile fellows owe much of their vileness; whereas, if they found themselves shunned, and despised, and treated as beasts of prey, as they are, they would run to their caverns, there howl by themselves; and none but such as sad accident, or unpitiable presumption, threw in their way, would suffer by them.

He afterwards talked very seriously, at times, to Mr. Hickman: At *times*, I say; for it was with such breaks and starts of gaiety, turning to this lady, and to that, and then to Mr. Hickman again, resuming a serious or a gay air at pleasure, that he took every-body's eye, the women especially; who were full of their whispering admirations of him, qualified with *If's*, and *But's*, and *What pity's*, and such sort of stuff, that shewed, in their very dispraises, too much liking.

Well may our Sex be the sport and ridicule of such libertines ! Unthinking eye-governed creatures !—Would not a little reflection teach us, that a man of merit must be a man of modesty, because a diffident one ? And that such a wretch as this must have taken his degrees in wickedness, and gone thro' a course of vileness, before he could arrive at this impenetrable effrontery ? An effrontery which can proceed only from the light opinion he has of us, and the high one of himself.

But our Sex are generally modest and bashful themselves, and are too apt to consider that, which, in the main, is their principal grace, as a defect : And finely do they judge, when they think of supplying that defect, by choosing a man, who cannot be ashamed.

His discourse to Mr. Hickman turned upon you, and his acknowledged injuries of you, tho' he could so lightly start from the subject, and return to it.

I have no patience with such a devil — *Man* he cannot be called. To be sure he would behave in the same manner any-where, or in any presence, even at the altar itself, if a lady were with him there.

It shall ever be a rule with me, that he who does not regard a woman with some degree of reverence, will look upon her, and occasionally *treat* her, with contempt.

He had the confidence to offer to take me out ; but I absolutely refused him, and shunned him all I could, putting on the most contemptuous airs : But nothing could mortify him.

I wished twenty times I had not been there.

The gentlemen were as ready as I to wish he had broken his neck, rather than been present, I believe : For nobody was regarded but him. So little of the fop, yet so elegant and rich in his dress : His person so specious : His manner so intrepid : So much meaning and penetration in his face : So much gaiety, yet so little of the monkey : Tho' a travell'd gentleman, yet no affectation ; no mere toupet-man ; but all manly ; and his courage and wit, the one so known, the other so dreaded, you must think the petits-maitres (of which there were four or five present) were most deplorably off in his company : And one grave gentleman observed to me { pleased to see me shun him as I did )

that

that the poet's observation was too true, That the generality of ladies were *Rakes in their hearts*, or they could not be so much taken with a man who had so notorious a character.

I told him, The reflection both of the poet and applier was much too general, and made with more ill-nature than good manners.

When the wretch saw how industriously I avoided him (shifting from one part of the hall to another), he at last boldly stept up to me, as my mother and Mr. Hickman were talking to me; and thus, before them, accosted me:

I beg your pardon, Madam; but, by your mother's leave, I must have a few moments conversation with you, either here, or at your own house; and I beg you will give me the opportunity.

Nancy, said my mother, hear what he has to say to you. In my presence you may: And better in the adjoining apartment, if it must be, than to come to you at our own house.

I retired to one corner of the hall, my mother following me, and he, taking Mr. Hickman under the arm, following her—Well, Sir, said I, what have you to say?—Tell me here.

I have been telling Mr. Hickman, said he, how much I am concerned for the injuries I have done to the most excellent woman in the world: And yet, that she obtained such a glorious triumph over me the last time I had the honour to see her, as, with my penitence, ought to have qualified her former resentments: But that I will, with all my soul, enter into any measures to obtain her forgiveness of me. My cousins Montague have told you this. Lady Betty, and Lady Sarah, and my Lord M. are engaged for my honour. I know your power with the dear creature. My cousins told me, you gave them hopes you would use it in my behalf. My Lord M. and his two sisters are impatiently expecting the fruits of it. You must have heard from her before now: I hope you have. And will you be so good, as to tell me, if I may have any hopes?

If I must speak on this subject, Let me tell you, that you have broken her heart. You know not the value of

the lady you have injured. You deserve her not. And she despises you, as she ought.

Dear Miss Howe, mingle not passion with denunciations so severe. I must know my fate. I will go abroad once more, if I find her absolutely irreconcileable. But I hope she will give me leave to attend upon her, to know my doom from her own mouth.

It would be death immediate for her to see you. And what must *You* be, to be able to look her in the face?

I then reproached him (with vehemence enough, you may believe) on his baseness, and the evils he had made you suffer: The distress he had reduced you to: All your friends made your enemies: The vile house he had carried you to: Hinted at his villainous arts; the dreadful arrest; And told him of your present deplorable illness, and resolution to die rather than have him.

He vindicated not any part of his conduct, but that of the arrest; and so solemnly protested his sorrow for his usage of you, accusing himself in the freest manner, and by deserved appellations, that I promised to lay before you this part of our conversation. And now you have it.

My mother, as well as Mr. Hickman, believes, from what passed on this occasion, that he is touched in conscience for the wrongs he has done you: But, by his whole behaviour, I must own, it seems to me, that nothing can touch him for half an hour together. Yet I have no doubt, that he would willingly marry you; and it piques his pride, I could see, that he should be denied: As it did mine, that such a wretch had dared to think it in his power to have such a woman whenever he pleased; and that it must be accounted a condescension, and matter of obligation (by all his own family at least), that he would vouchsafe to think of marriage.

Now, my dear, you have the reason before you, why I suspend the decisive Negative to the ladies of his family: My mother, Miss Lloyd, and Miss Biddulph, who were inquisitive after the subject of our retired conversation, and whose curiosity I thought it was right, in some degree, to gratify (especially as those young ladies are of our select acquaintance), are all of opinion, that you should be his.

You will let Mr. Hickman know your whole mind;

and

and when he acquaints me with it, I will tell you all my own.

Meantime, may the news he will bring me of the state of your health, be favourable! prays, with the utmost fervency,

Your ever-faithful and affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

## LETTER LXXV.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

My dearest Miss Howe, Thursday, July 27.

AFTER I have thankfully acknowledged your favour in sending Mr. Hickman to visit me before you set out upon your intended journey, I must chide you (in the sincerity of that faithful love, which could not be the love it is, if it would not admit of that cementing freedom) for suspending the decisive Negative, which, upon such full deliberation, I had intreated you to give to Mr. Lovelace's relations.

I am sorry, that I am obliged to repeat to you, my dear, who know me so well, that, were I sure I should live many years, I would not have Mr. Lovelace: Much less can I think of him, as it is probable I may not live one.

As to the world, and its censures, you know, my dear, that, however desirous I always was of a fair fame, yet I never thought it right to give more than a second place to the world's opinion. The challenges made to Mr. Lovelace by Miss D'Oily, in public company, are a fresh proof, that I have lost my reputation: And what advantage would it be to me, were it retrievable, and were I to live long, if I could not acquit myself to myself?

Having, in my former, said so much on the freedoms you have taken with my friends, I shall say the less now: But your hint, that something else has newly passed between some of them and you, gives me great concern, and that as well for my own sake, as for theirs; since it must necessarily incense them against me. I wish, my dear, that I had been left to my own course on an occasion so very interesting to myself. But since what is done cannot be helped, I must abide the consequences: Yet I dread,

*more than before*, what may be my sister's answer, if an answer be at all vouchsafed.

Will you give me leave, my dear, to close this subject with one remark?—It is this: That my beloved friend, in points where her own laudable *zeal* is concerned, has ever seemed more ready to fly from the *rebuke*, than the *fault*. If you will excuse this freedom, I will acknowledge thus far in favour of your way of thinking, as to the conduct of some parents in these nice cases, That *indiscreet* opposition does frequently as much mischief as *giddy* love.

As to the invitation you are so kind as to give me, to remove privately into your neighbourhood, I have told Mr. Hickman, that I will consider of it: But believe, if you will be so good as to excuse me, that I shall not accept of it, even should I be *able* to remove. I will give you my reasons for declining it; and so I ought, when both my love, and my gratitude, would make a visit now-and-then, from my dear Miss Howe, the most consolatory thing in the world to me.

You must know then, that this great town, wicked as it is, wants not opportunities of being better; having daily prayers at several churches in it; and I am desirous, as my strength will admit, to embrace those opportunities. The method I have proposed to myself (and was beginning to practise, when that cruel arrest deprived me both of freedom and strength), is this: When I was disposed to gentle exercise, I took a chair to St. Dunstan's church in Fleet-street, where are prayers at seven in the morning: I proposed, if the weather favoured, to walk (if not, to take chair) to Lincoln's-Inn chapel; where, at eleven in the morning, and at five in the afternoon, are the same desirable opportunities; and at other times to go no farther than Covent-Garden church, where are early morning prayers likewise.

This method, pursued, I doubt not, will greatly help, as it has already done, to calm my disturbed thoughts, and to bring me to that perfect resignation, which I aspire after: For I must own, my dear, that sometimes still my griefs, and my reflections, are too heavy for me; and the aid I can draw from *religious duties* is hardly sufficient to support my staggering reason. I am a very young creature

creature, you know, my dear, to be left to my own conduct, in such circumstances as I am in.

Another reason why I choose not to go down into your neighbourhood, is, The displeasure that might arise on my account between your mother and you.

If, indeed, you were actually married, and the worthy man (who would then have a title to all your regard) were earnestly desirous of my near neighbourhood, I know not what I might do: For altho' I might not perhaps intend to give up my other important reasons at the *time* I should make you a congratulatory visit, yet I might not know how to deny myself the pleasure of continuing near you, when there.

I send you inclosed the copy of my letter to my sister. I hope it will be thought to be written with a true penitent spirit; for indeed it is. I desire that you will not think I stoop too low in it; since there can be no such thing as that, in a child, to parents whom she has unhappily offended.

But if still (perhaps more disgusted than before at your freedom with them) they should pass it by with the contempt of silence (for I have not yet been favoured with an answer), I must learn to think it right in them so to do; especially as it is my first direct application: For I have often censured the boldness of those, who, applying for a favour, which it is in a person's option to grant, or to refuse, take the liberty of being offended, if they are not gratified; as if the *petitioned-to* had not as good a right to reject, as the *petitioner* to ask.

But if my letter should be answered, and that in such terms as will make me loth to communicate it to so warm a friend—you must not, my dear, take upon you to censure my relations; but allow for them, as they know not what I have suffered; as being filled with *just* resentments against me (*just* to them, if they *think* them *just*); and as not being able to judge of the reality of my penitence.

And after all, what can they do for me?—They can only pity me: And what will that do, but augment their own grief; to which, at present, their *resentment* is an alleviation? For can they, by their pity, restore to me my lost reputation? Can they, by it, purchase a sponge, that will wipe out from the year the past fatal five months of my life (a)?

Your

(a) She takes in the time that she appointed to meet Mr. Lovelace.

Your account of the gay, unconcerned behaviour of Mr. Lovelace, at the Colonel's, does not surprise me at all, after I am told, that he had the intrepidity to go thither, knowing who were *invited* and *expected*.—Only this, my dear, I really wonder at, that Miss Howe could imagine, that I could have a thought of such a man for a husband.

Poor wretch! I pity him, to see him fluttering about, abusing talents that were given him for excellent purposes; taking courage for wit; and dancing, fearless of danger, on the edge of a precipice!

But, indeed, his threatening to see me, most sensibly alarms and shocks me. I cannot but hope, that I never, never more shall see him in this world.

Since you are so loth, my dear, to send the desired Negative to the ladies of his family, I will only trouble you to transmit the letter I shall inclose for that purpose; directed indeed to yourself, because it was to you that those ladies applied themselves on this occasion; but to be sent by you to any one of the ladies, at your own choice.

I commend myself, my dearest Miss Howe, to your prayers; and conclude with repeated thanks for sending Mr. Hickman to me; and with wishes for your health and happiness, and for the speedy celebration of your nuptials,

*Your ever-affectionate and obliged,*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

## LETTER LXXVI.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.*

[*Inclosed in the preceding.*]

*My dearest Miss Howe,* *Thursday, July 27.*

SINCE you seem loth to acquiesce in my determined resolution, signified to you as soon as I was able to hold a pen, I beg the favour of you, by this, or by any other way you think most proper, to acquaint the worthy Ladies who have applied to you in behalf of their relation, that, altho' I am infinitely obliged to their generous opinion of me, yet I cannot consent to *sacrifice*, as I may say, Mr. Lovelace's repeated breaches of all moral sanctions, and hazard my future happiness by an union with a man,

tho'

thro' whose premeditated injuries, in a long train of the basest contrivances, I have forfeited my *temporal* hopes.

He himself, when he reflects upon his own actions, must surely bear testimony to the justice, as well as fitness, of my determination. The Ladies, I dare say, would, were they to know the whole of my unhappy story.

Be pleased to acquaint them, that I deceive myself, if my resolution on this head (however ingratefully, and even unhumanly, he has treated me) be not owing more to principle than *passion*. Nor can I give a stronger proof of the truth of this assurance, than by declaring, that I *can* and will forgive him, on this one easy condition, *That he will never molest me more.*

In whatever way you choose to make this declaration, be pleased to let my most respectful compliments to the Ladies of the noble family, and to my Lord M. accompany it. And do you, my dear, believe, that I shall be, to the last moment of my life,

*Your ever-obliged and affectionate*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

## LETTER LXXVII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq.

Friday, July 28.

Have three letters of thine to take notice of (a): But am divided in my mind, whether to quarrel with thee, in thy unmerciful reflections; or to thank thee, for thy acceptable particularity and diligence. But several of my sweet dears have I, indeed, in my time made to cry and laugh in a breath; nay, one side of their pretty faces laugh, before the cry could go off of the other: Why may I not, therefore, curse and applaud thee in the same moment? — take both in one: And what follows, as it shall rise from my pen.

How often have I ingenuously confessed my sins against this excellent creature? — Yet thou never sparest me, altho' bad a man as myself. Since then, I get so little by my confessions, I had a good mind to try to defend myself; and that not only from antient and modern story, but from common

(a) Letters lxxi. lxxii. lxxiii.

common practice; and yet avoid repeating any-thing I have suggested before in my own behalf.

I am in a humour to play the fool with my pen: Briefly then, from antient story first:—Dost thou not think, that I am as much intitled to forgiveness on Miss Harlowe's account, as Virgil's hero was on Queen Dido's? For what an ingrateful varlet was that vagabond to the hospitable princess, who had *willingly* conferred upon him the last favour?—Stealing away (whence, I suppose, the ironical phrase of *Trusty Trojan* to this day) like a thief; pretendedly indeed at the command of the gods; but could that be, when the errand he went upon was to rob other princes, not only of their dominions, but of their lives?—Yet this fellow is, at every word, the *pious Aeneas*, with the immortal bard who celebrates him.

Should Miss Harlowe even break her heart (which Heaven forbid!) for the usage she has received (to say nothing of her disappointed pride, to which her death would be attributable, more than to reason) what comparison will *her* fate hold to Queen Dido's? And have I half the obligation to her, that Aeneas had to the Queen of Carthage? The latter placing a confidence, the former none, in her man?—Then, whom *else* have I robbed? Whom else have I injured? Her brother's worthless life I gave him, instead of taking any man's, as the Trojan vagabond did the lives of thousands. Why then should it not be the *pious* Lovelace, as well as the *pious Aeneas*? For, dost thou think, had a conflagration happened, and had it been in my power, that I would not have saved my old Anchises (as he did his from the Ilion bonfire) even at the expence of my Creüsa, had I had a wife of that name?

But for a more modern instance in my favour—Have I used Miss Harlowe, as our famous Maiden-Queen, as she was called, used one of her own blood, a Sister-Queen who threw herself into her protection from her rebel subjects; and whom she detained prisoner eighteen years, and at last cut off her head? Yet (credited by worse and weaker reigns, a succession four deep) do not honest Protestants pronounce *her* pious too?—And call her particularly *the Queen*?

As to *common practice*—Who, let me ask, that has it in

his power to gratify a predominant passion, be it what it will, denies himself the gratification?—Leaving it to cooler deliberation; and, if he be a great man, to his flatterers; to find a reason for it afterwards?

Then, as to the worst part of my treatment of this lady—How many men are there, who, as well as I, have sought, by intoxicating liquors, first to inebriate, then to subdue? What signifies what the *potations* were, when the same end was in view?

Let me tell thee, upon the whole, that neither the Queen of Carthage, nor the Queen of Scots, would have thought they had any reason to complain of cruelty, had they been used no worse than I have used the Queen of my heart: And then do I not aspire with my whole soul to repair by marriage? Would the *pius Aeneas*, thinkest thou, have done such a piece of justice by Dido, had she lived?

Come, come, Belford, let people run away with notions as they will, I am *comparatively* a very innocent man. And if by these, and other like reasonings, I have quieted my own conscience, a great end is answered. What have I to do with the world?

And now I sit me peaceably down to consider thy letters.

I hope thy pleas in my favour (*a*), when she gave thee (so generously gave thee), for me, my letters, were urged with an honest energy. But I suspect thee much for being too ready to give up thy client. Then thou hast such a misgiving aspect; an aspect, rather inviting rejection, than carrying persuasion with it; and art such an hesitating, such an humming and hawing caitiff; that I shall attribute my failure, if I do fail, rather to the inability and ill looks of my advocate, than to my cause. Again, Thou art deprived of the force men of our cast give to arguments; for she won't let thee *swear!* — Art moreover a very heavy, thoughtless fellow; tolerable only at a second rebound; a horrid dunce at the *impromptu*. These, encountering with such a lady, are great disadvantages.—And still a greater is thy balancing (as thou dost at present) between old Rakery and new Reformation: Since this puts thee into the same situation with her, as they told me at Leipsick Martin Luther was in, at the first public dispute  
which

(*a*) See p. 256, 257.

which he held, in defence of his supposed new doctrines, with Eckius. For Martin was then but a linsey-wolley reformer. He retained some dogma, which, by natural consequence, made others that he held untenable. So that Eckius, in some points, had the better of him. But, from that time, he made clear work, renouncing all that stood in his way: And then his doctrines ran upon all fours. He was never puzzled afterwards; and could boldly declare, that he would defend them in the face of angels and men; and to his friends, who would have dissuaded him from venturing to appear before the emperor Charles the Fifth at Spires, *That, were there as many devils at Spire, as tiles upon the houses, he would go.* An answer that is admired by every Protestant Saxon to this day.

Since then thy unhappy awkwardness destroys the force of thy arguments, I think thou hadst better (for the present, however) forbear to urge her on the subject of accepting the reparation I offer; lest the continual teasing of her to forgive me should but strengthen her in her denials of forgiveness; till, for consistency sake, she'll be forced to adhere to a resolution so often avowed: Whereas, if left to herself, a little time, and better health, which will bring on better spirits, will give her quicker resentments; those quicker resentments will lead her into vehemence; that vehemence will subside, and turn into expostulation and parley: My friends will then interpose, and guaranty for me: And all our trouble on both sides will be over.—Such is the natural course of things.

I cannot endure thee for thy hopelessness in the lady's recovery (a); and that in contradiction to the Doctor and Apothecary.

*Time, in the words of Congreve, thou sayst, will give increase to her afflictions.* But why so? Knowest thou not, that those words (so contrary to common experience) were applied to the case of a person, while passion was in its full vigour?—At such a time, every-one in a heavy grief thinks the same: But as Enthusiasts do by Scripture, so dost thou by the poets thou hast read: Any-thing that carries the most distant allusion from either, to the case in hand, is put down by both for gospel, however incongruous to

(a) See p. 257.

the general scope of either, and to *that case*. So once, in a pulpit, I heard one of the former very vehemently declare himself to be a *dead dog*; when every man, woman, and child, were convinced to the contrary by his howling.

I can tell thee, that, if nothing else will do, I am determined, in spite of thy buskin-airs, and of thy engagements for me to the contrary, to see her myself.

Face to face have I known many a quarrel made up, which distance would have kept alive, and widened. Thou wilt be a madder Jack than him in the Tale of a Tub, if thou givest an active opposition to this interview.

In short, I cannot bear the thought, that a lady, whom once I had bound to me in the filken cords of love, should slip through my fingers, and be able, while *my* heart flames out with a violent passion for her, to despise me, and to set both love and me at defiance. Thou canst not imagine how much I envy *thee*, and her *Doctor*, and her *Apothecary*, and every-one whom I hear of being admitted to her presence and conversation; and wish to be the *one* or the *other* in turn.

Wherefore, if nothing else will do, I *will* see her. I'll tell thee of an admirable expedient, just come cross me, to save *thy* promise, and *my own*.

Mrs. Lovick, you say, is a good woman: If the lady be worse, she shall advise her to send for a parson to pray by her: Unknown to her, unknown to the lady, unknown to *thee* (for so it may pass), I will contrive to be the man, petticoated out, and vested in a gown and cassock. I once, for a certain purpose, did assume the canonicals; and I was thought to make a fine sleek appearance, my broad rose-bound beaver became me *mightily*, and I was much admired upon the whole, by all who saw me.

Methinks it must be charmingly apropos to see me kneeling down by her bed-side (I am sure I shall pray heartily), beginning out of the Common-prayer book the Sick Office for the restoration of the languishing lady, and concluding with an exhortation to charity and forgiveness for myself.

I will consider of this matter. But, in whatever shape I shall choose to appear, of this thou mayst assure thyself, I will apprise thee before-hand of my determined-upon visit, that thou mayest contrive to be out of the way, and

and to know nothing of the matter. This will save thy word ; and, as to mine, can she think worse of me than she does at present ?

An indispensable of true love and profound respect, in thy wise opinion (*a*), is absurdity or awkwardness.—"Tis surprising, that thou shouldest be one of those partial mortals, who take their measures of right and wrong from what they find *themselves to be*, and cannot help being !—So awkwardness is a perfection in the awkward !—At this rate, no man ever can be in the wrong. But I insist upon it, that an awkward fellow will do every-thing awkwardly. And if he be like thee, will rack his unmeaning brain for excuses as awkward as his first fault. Respectful Love is an inspirer of actions worthy of itself ; and he who cannot shew it, where he most means it, manifests, that he is an unpolite rough creature, a perfect Belford, and has it not in him.

But here thou'l<sup>t</sup> throw out that notable witticism, that my outside is the best of *me*, thine the worst of *thee* ; and that, if I set about mending my mind, thou wilt mend thy appearance.

But, pr'ythee, Jack, don't stay for *that* ; but set about thy amendment in dress, when thou leavest off thy mourning ; for why shouldest thou prepossess in thy disfavour all those who never saw thee before ?—It is hard to remove early-taken prejudices, whether of liking or distaste : People will *bunt*, as I may say, for reasons to confirm first impressions, in compliment to their own sagacity : Nor is it every mind that has the ingenuity to confess itself mistaken, when it finds itself to be wrong. Thou thyself art an adept in the pretended science of reading of men ; and, whenever thou art out, wilt study to find some reasons why it was more probable that thou shouldest have been right ; and wilt watch every motion and action, and every word and sentiment, in the person thou hast once censured, for proofs, in order to help thee to revive and maintain thy first opinion. And, indeed, as thou seldom errest on the *favourable side*, human nature is so vile a thing, that thou art likely to be right five times in six, on the *other*. And perhaps it is but guessing of others, by what thou

findest

(a) See p. 251.

findest in thy own heart, to have reason to compliment thyself on thy penetration.

Here is preachment for thy preaching : And, I hope, if thou likest thy own, thou wilt thank me for mine ; the rather, as thou may'st be the better for it, if thou wilt : Since it is calculated for thy own meridian.

Well, but the lady refers my destiny to the letter she has written, actually written, to Miss Howe ; to whom, it seems, she has given her reasons, why she will not have me. I long to know the contents of this letter : But am in great hopes, that she has so expressed her denials, as shall give room to think, she only wants to be persuaded to the contrary, in order to reconcile herself to herself.

I could make some pretty observations upon one or two places of the lady's meditation : But, wicked as I am thought to be, I never was so abandoned, as to turn into ridicule, or even to treat with levity, things sacred. I think it the highest degree of ill manners, to jest upon those subjects, which the world in general look upon with veneration, and call divine. I would not even treat the mythology of the Heathen, to a Heathen, with the ridicule that perhaps would fairly lie from some of the absurdities that strike every common observer. Nor, when at Rome, and in other popish countries, did I ever behave shockingly at those ceremonies which I thought very extraordinary : For I saw some people affected, and seemingly edified, by them ; and I contented myself to think, tho' they were beyond my comprehension, that, if they answered any good end to the *many*, there was religion enough in them, or civil policy at least, to exempt them from the ridicule of even a *bad* man, who had common sense, and good manners.

For the like reason, I have never given noisy or tumultuous instances of dislike to a new Play, if I thought it ever so indifferent : For, I concluded first, that every one was intitled to see quietly what he paid for : And, next, as the Theatre (the epitome of the world) consisted of Pit, Boxes, and Gallery, it was hard, I thought, if there could be such a performance exhibited, as would not please somebody in that mixed multitude : And, if it did, those some-

bodies

bodies had as much right to enjoy their own judgments un-disturbedly, as I had to enjoy mine.

This was *my way* of shewing my disapprobation; I never went again. And as a man is at his option, whether he will go to a Play, or not, he has not the same excuse for expressing his dislike clamorously, as if he were compelled to see it.

I have ever, thou knowest, declared against those shallow libertines, who could not make out their pretensions to wit, but on two subjects, to which every man of true wit will scorn to be beholden: PROFANENESS and OBSCURITY, I mean; which must shock the ears of every man or woman of sense, without answering any end, but of shewing a very low and abandoned nature. And, till I came acquainted with the brutal Mowbray (no great pride to myself from such a tutor), I was far from making so free, as I now do, with oaths and curses; for then I was forced to outswear him sometimes, to keep him in his allegiance to me his general: Nay, I often check myself to myself, for this empty, unprofitable liberty of speech; in which we are outdone by the sons of the common sewer,

All my vice is women, and the love of plots and intrigues; and I cannot but wonder, how I fell into those shocking freedoms of speech; since, generally-speaking, they are far from helping forward my main end: Only now-and-then, indeed, a little novice rises to one's notice, who seems to think dress, and oaths, and curses, the diagnostics of the rakish spirit she is inclined to favour: And, indeed, they are the only qualifications, that some, who are called Rakes, and Pretty fellows, have to boast of. But what must the women be, who can be attracted by such *empty-soul'd* profligates? — Since wickedness *with* wit is hardly excusable; but, *without* it, is equally shocking and contemptible.

There again is preaching for thy preaching; and thou wilt be apt to think, that I am reforming too: But no such matter. If this were *new light* darting in upon me, as thy morality seems to be to thee, something of this kind might be apprehended: But this was *always* my way of thinking; and I defy thee, or any of thy brethren, to name a time, when I have either ridiculed Religion, or

talked obscenely. On the contrary, thou knowest how often I have checked that Bear in love-matters, Mowbray, and the finical Tourville, and thyself too, for what ye have called the double-entendre. In *love*, as in points that required a *manly resentment*, it has always been my maxim, to *act*, rather than *talk*; and I do assure thee, as to the first, the ladies themselves will excuse the one sooner than the other.

As to the admiration thou expressest for the books of Scripture, thou art certainly right in it. But 'tis strange to me, that thou wert ignorant of their beauty, and noble simplicity, till now. Their antiquity always made me reverence them: And how was it possible that thou couldst not, for that reason, if for no other, give them a perusal?

I'll tell thee a short story, which I had from my tutor, admonishing me against exposing myself by *ignorant wonder*, when I should quit college, go to town, or travel.

'The first time Dryden's Alexander's Feast fell into his hands, he told me, he was prodigiously charmed with it: And, having never heard any-body speak of it before, thought, as thou dost of the Bible, that he had made a new discovery.

'He hastened to an appointment which he had with several wits (for he was then in town), one of whom was a noted Critic, who, according to him, had more merit than good fortune; for all the little nibblers in wit, whose writings would not stand the test of criticism, made it, he said, a common cause to run him down, as men would a mad dog.

'The young gentleman (for young he then was) set forth magnificently in the praises of that inimitable performance; and gave himself airs of second-hand merit, for finding out its beauties.

'The old Bard heard him out with a smile, which the collegian took for approbation, till he spoke; and then it was in these mortifying words: 'Sdeath, Sir, where have you lived till now, or with what sort of company have you conversed, young as you are, that you have never before heard of the finest piece in the English language?'

This story had such an effect upon me, who had ever a

proud heart, and wanted to be thought a clever fellow, that, in order to avoid the like disgrace, I laid down two rules to myself. The first, whenever I went into company where there were strangers, to hear every-one of them speak, before I gave myself liberty to prate: The other, if I found any of them above my match, to give up all title to new discoveries, contenting myself to praise what they praised, as beauties familiar to me, tho' I had never heard of them before. And so, by degrees, I got the reputation of a wit myself: And when I threw off all restraint, and books, and learned conversation, and fell in with some of our brethren who are now wandering in Erebus, and with such others as Belton, Mowbray, Tourville, and thyself, I set up on my own stock; and, like what we have been told of Sir Richard, in his latter days, valued myself on being the emperor of the company; for, having fathomed the depth of them all, and afraid of no rival but thee, whom also I had got a little under (by my gaiety and promptitude at least), I proudly, like Addison's Cato, delighted to give laws to my little senate.

Proceed with thee by-and-by.

### L E T T E R LXXVIII.

*Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;*

BUT now I have cleared myself of any intentional levity on occasion of my beloved's meditation; which, as thou observest, is finely suited to her case (that is to say, as she and you have drawn her case); I cannot help expressing my pleasure, that by one or two verses of it (*the arrow, Jack, and what she feared being come upon her!*) I am encouraged to hope, what it will be very surprising to me if it do not happen: That is, in plain English, that the dear creature is in the way to be a mamma.

This cursed arrest, because of the ill effects the terror might have had upon her, in that hoped-for circumstance, has concerned me more than on any other account. It would be the pride of my life to prove, in this charming frost-piece, the triumph of nature over principle, and to have a young Lovelace by such an angel: And then, for its sake, I am confident she will live, and will legitimate it. And what

a meri-

a meritorious little cherub would it be, that should lay an obligation upon both parents before it was born, which neither of them would be able to repay!—Could I be sure it is so, I should be out of all pain for her recovery: *Pain*, I say; since, were she to *die*—(*Die!* abominable word! how I hate it!) I verily think I should be the most miserable man in the world.

As for the earnestness she expresses for death, she has found the words ready to her hand in honest Job; else she would not have delivered herself with such strength and vehemence.

Her innate piety (as I have more than once observed) will not permit her to shorten her own life, either by violence or neglect. She has a mind too noble for that; and would have done it before now, had she designed any such thing: For, to do it, like the Roman matron, when the mischief is over, and it can serve no end; and when the man, however a Tarquin, as some may think him, in this action, is not a Tarquin in power, so that no national point can be made of it; is what she has too much good sense to think of.

Then, as I observed in a like case, a little while ago, the distress, when this was written, was strong upon her; and she saw no end of it: But all was darkness and apprehension before her. Moreover, has she it not in her power to *disappoint*, as much as she has been disappointed? Revenge, Jack, has induced many a woman to cherish a life, which grief and despair would otherwise have put an end to.

And, after all, death is no such eligible thing, as Job in his *calamities*, makes it. And a death desired merely from worldly disappointment shews not a right mind, let me tell this lady, whatever she may think of it (*a*). You

(a) Mr. Lovelace could not know, that the lady was so thoroughly sensible of the solidity of this doctrine, as she really was: For, in letter lix. to Mrs. Norton, (p. 247. of this volume) she says,—"Nor let it be imagined, that my present turn of mind proceeds from gloominess or melancholy; for, altho' it was brought on by disappointment (the world shewing me early, even at my first rushing into it, its true and ugly face); yet, I hope, that it has obtain'd a better root, and will every day more and more, by its fruits, demonstrate to me, and to all my friends, that it has."

and I, Jack, altho' not afraid in the height of passion or resentment to rush into those dangers which might be followed by a sudden and violent death, whenever a point of honour calls upon us, would shudder at his cool and deliberate approach in a lingering sickness, which had debilitated the spirits.

So we read of a French general, in the reign of Harry the IV<sup>th</sup> (I forget his name, if it were not Mareschal Bi-ron) who, having faced with intrepidity the ghastly varlet on an hundred occasions in the field, was the most dejected of wretches, when, having forfeited his life for treason, he was led with all the cruel parade of preparation, and surrounding guards, to the scaffold.

The poet says well :

*'Tis not the Stoic lesson, got by rote,  
The pomp of words, and pedant dissertation,  
That can support us in the hour of terror.  
Books have taught cowards to talk nobly of it :  
But when the trial comes, they start, and stand aghast.*

Very true : For then it is the old man in the fable, with his bundle of sticks.

The lady is well read in Shakespeare, our English pride and glory ; and must sometimes reason with herself in his words, so greatly expressed, that the subject, affecting as it is, cannot produce any thing more so.

*Ay, but to die, and go we know not where ;  
To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot ;  
This sensible, warm motion to become  
A kneaded clod ; and the delighted spirit  
To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside  
In thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice :  
To be imprison'd in the viewless winds,  
Or blown, with restless violence, about  
The pendent worlds ; or to be worse than worst  
Of those that lawless and uncertain thought  
Imagines howling : 'Tis too horrible !  
The weariest and most loaded worldly life,  
That pain, age, penury, and imprisonment,  
Can lay on nature, is a paradise  
To what we fear of death.*

I find,

I find, by one of thy three letters, that my beloved had some account from Hickman of my interview with Miss Howe, at Col. Ambrose's. I had a very agreeable time of it there; altho' severely raillied by several of the assemblée. It concerns me, however, not a little, to find our affair so generally known among the *Flippanti* of both sexes. It is all her own fault. There never, surely, was such an odd little soul as this.—Not to keep her own secret, when the revealing of it could answer no possible good end; and when she wants not (one would think) to raise to herself either pity or friends, or to me enemies, by the proclamation! — Why, Jack, must not all her own sex laugh in their sleeves at her weakness! What would become of the peace of the world, if all women should take it into their heads to follow her example? What a fine time of it would the heads of families have? Their wives always filling their ears with their confessions; their daughters with theirs: Sisters would be every day setting their brothers about cutting of throats, if they had at heart *the honour of their families*, as it is called; and the whole world would either be a scene of confusion, or cuckoldom must be as much the fashion as it is in Lithuania (a).

I am glad, however, that Miss Howe, as much as she hates me, kept her word with my cousins on their visit to her, and with me at the Colonel's, to endeavour to persuade her friend to make up all matters by matrimony; which, no doubt, is the best, nay, the *only* method she can take, for her own honour, and that of her family.

I had once thoughts of revenging myself on that little vixen, and, particularly, as thou mayst (b) remember, had planned something to this purpose on the journey she is going to take, which had been talked of some time. But, I think—Let me see—Yes, I *think*, I will let this Hickman have her safe and intire, as thou believest the fellow to be a tolerable sort of a mortal, and that I had made the worst of him: And I am glad, for his own sake, he has not launched out too virulently against me to thee.

(a) In Lithuania, the women are said to have *so allowedly* their gallants, called *adjutres*, that the husbands hardly ever enter upon any party of pleasure without them.

(b) This plot of his is mentioned Vol. iv. p. 196.

And thus, if I pay thee not in quality, I do in quantity (and yet leave a multitude of things unobserved upon): For I begin not to know what to do with myself here—Tired with Lord M. who, in his recovery, has play'd upon me the fable of the nurse, the crying child, and the wolf—Tired with my cousins Montague, tho' charming girls, were they not so near of kin—Tired with Mowbray and Tourville, and their everlasting identity—Tired with the country—Tired of myself: Longing for what I have not; I must go to town; and there have an interview with the charmer of my soul: For desperate diseases must have desperate remedies; and I only wait to know my doom from Miss Howe; and then, if it be rejection, I will try my fate, and receive my sentence at her feet. — But I will apprise thee of it before-hand, as I told thee, that thou mayst keep thy parole with the lady, in the best manner thou canst.

## LETTER LXXIX.

*Miss Howe, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.*

[*In answer to hers of July 27. p. 275.*]

*Friday night, July 28.*

I Will now, my dearest friend, write to you all my mind, without reserve, on your resolution not to have this vilest of men. You gave me, in yours of Sunday the 23d, reasons so worthy of the pure mind of my Clarissa Harlowe, in support of this your resolution, that nothing but self-love, lest I should lose my ever-amiable friend, could have prevailed upon me to wish you to alter it.

Indeed, I thought it was impossible there could be (however desirable) so noble an instance given by any of our Sex, of a passion conquered, when there were so many inducements to give way to it. And, therefore, I was willing to urge you once more to overcome your just indignation, and to be prevailed upon by the solicitations of *his* friends, before you carried your resentments to so great a height, that it would be more difficult for you, and less to your honour, to comply, than if you had complied at first.

But now, my dear, that I see you fixed in your noble resolution; and that it is impossible for your pure mind to join

join itself with that of so perjured a miscreant; I congratulate you most heartily upon it; and beg your pardon for but seeming to doubt, that *Theory* and *Practice* were not the same thing with my beloved Clarissa Harlowe.

I have only one thing that saddens my heart on this occasion; and that is, the bad state of health Mr. Hickman (unwillingly) owns you are in: For, altho' you so well observe the doctrine you always laid down to me, That a censured person should first seek to be justified to herself, and give but a second place to the world's opinion of her; and, in all cases where the two could not be reconciled, to prefer the first to the last; and tho' you are so well justified to your Anna Howe, and to your own heart; yet, my dear, let me beseech you to endeavour to recover your health and spirits, by all possible means: And this, as what, if it can be effected, will crown the work, and shew the world, that you were indeed got above the base wretch; and, tho' put out of your course for a little while, could resume it again, and go on blessing all within your knowledge, as well by your example, as by your precepts.

For Heaven's sake, then, for the world's sake, for the honour of our sex, and for my sake, once more I beseech you, try to overcome this shock: And, if you can overcome it, I shall then be as happy as I wish to be; for I cannot, indeed I cannot, think of parting with you, for many, many years to come.

The reasons you give for discouraging my wishes to have you near us, are so convincing, that I ought at present to acquiesce in them: But, my dear, when your mind is fully settled, as (now you are so absolutely determined in it, with regard to this wretch) I hope it will soon be, I shall expect you with us, or near us: And then you shall chalk out every path that I will set my foot in; nor will I turn aside either to the right hand or to the left.

You wish I had not mediated for you to your friends. I wish so too; because it was ineffectual; because it may give new ground for the malice of some of them to work upon; and because you are angry with me for doing so. But how, as I said in my former, could I sit down quietly, knowing how uneasy their implacableness must make you? But I will tear myself from the subject—for I see I shall

be warm again—and displease you—And there is not one thing in the world, that I would do, however agreeable to myself, if I thought it would disoblige you; nor any one that I would omit to do, if I knew it would give you pleasure. And, indeed, my dear, half-severe friend, I will try, if I cannot avoid the *fault*, as willingly as I would the *rebuke*.

For this reason, I forbear saying any-thing on so nice a subject as your letter to your sister. It *must* be right, because you think it so—and, if it be taken as it ought, that will shew you, that it *is*. But if it beget insults and revilings, as it is but too likely—I find you don't intend to let me know it.

You were always so ready to accuse yourself for other peoples faults, and to suspect your own conduct, rather than the judgment of your relations, that I have often told you, I cannot imitate you in this. It is not a necessary point of belief with me, that all people in *years* are therefore wise; or that all *young* people are therefore rash and headstrong: It may be *generally* the case, as far as I know: And possibly it may be so in the case of *my* mother and *her* girl: But I will venture to say, that it has not yet appeared to be so between the principals of Harlowe-Place, and their second daughter.

You are for excusing them before-hand for their expected cruelty, as not knowing what you have suffered, nor how ill you are: They have *heard* of the former, and are not sorry for it: Of the latter, they have been *told*, and I have most reason to know how they have taken it—But I shall be far from avoiding the *fault*, and as surely shall incur the *rebuke*, if I say any more upon this subject. I will therefore only add at present, That your reasonings in their behalf shew *you* to be all excellence; their returns to you, that *they* are all—Do, my dear, let me end with a little bit of spiteful justice—But you won't, I know—So I have done, quite done, however reluctantly: Yet, if you think of the word I would have said, don't doubt the justice of it, and fill up the blank with it.

You put me in hope, that, were I actually married, and Mr. Hickman to *desire* it, you would think of obliging me with a visit on the occasion; and that, perhaps, when with

with me, it would be difficult for you to remove far from me.

Lord, my dear, what a stress do you seem to lay upon Mr. Hickman's *desiring* it! To be sure he does, and would, of all things, desire to have you *near* us, and *with* us, if we might be so favoured. Policy, as well as veneration for *you*, would undoubtedly make the man, if not a fool, *desire* this. But let me tell you, that if Mr. Hickman, after marriage, should pretend to dispute with me my friendships, as I hope I am not quite a fool, I should let him know how far his own quiet was concerned in such an impertinence; especially if they were such friendships as were contracted before I knew him.

I know I always differed from you on this subject; for you think more highly of a *husband's* prerogative, than most people do of the *royal* one.—These notions, my dear, from a person of your sense and judgment, are no-way advantageous to us; inasmuch as they justify that insolent Sex in their assumptions; when hardly one out of ten of them, their opportunities considered, deserve any prerogative at all. Look thro' all the families we know; and we shall not find one-third of them have half the sense of their wives.—And yet these are to be vested with prerogatives!—And a woman of twice their sense has nothing to do but hear, tremble, and obey—And for *conscience*-sake too, I warrant!

But Mr. Hickman and I may perhaps have a little discourse upon these sort of subjects, before I suffer him to talk of the day: And then I shall let him know what he has to trust to; as he will me, if he be a sincere man, what he pretends to expect from me. But let me tell you, my dear, that it is more in *your* power, than perhaps you think it, to hasten the day so much pressed-for by my mother, as well as wish'd-for by you—For the very day that you can assure me, that you are in a tolerable state of health, and have discharged your Doctor and Apothecary, at their own motions, on that account—Some day in a month from that desirable news, shall be it—So, my dear, make haste and be well; and then this matter will be brought to effect in a manner more agreeable to your Anne Howe, than it otherwise ever can.

I send this day, by a particular hand, to the Misses Montague, your letter of just reprobation of the greatest profligate in the kingdom; and hope I shall not have done amiss, that I transcribe some of the paragraphs of your letter of the 23d, and send them with it, as you at first intended should be done.

You are, it seems (and that too much for your health), employed in writing. I hope it is in penning down the particulars of your tragical story. And my mother has put me in mind to press you to it, with a view, that one day, if it might be published under feigned names, it would be of as much use as honour to the Sex. My mother says, she cannot help admiring you for the propriety of your resentment in your refusel of the wretch; and she would be extremely glad to have her advice of penning your sad story complied with. And then, she says, your noble conduct throughout your trials and calamities will afford not only a shining Example to your Sex; but, at the same time (those calamities befalling SUCH a person) a fearful Warning to the inconsiderate young creatures of it.

On Monday we shall set out on our journey; and I hope to be back in a fortnight, and on my return will have one pull more with my mother for a London journey: And, if the *pretence must* be the buying of cloaths, the principal motive will be that of seeing once more my dear friend, while I can say, I have not finally given consent to the change of a visitor into a relation; and so can call myself MY OWN, as well as

YOURS,

ANNA HOWE.

## LETTER LXXX.

*Miss Howe, To the two Misses MONTAGUE.*

Dear Ladies,

Sat. July 29.

I Have not been wanting to use all my interest with my beloved friend, to induce her to forgive and be reconciled to your kinsman (tho' he has so ill deserved it); and have even repeated my earnest advice to her on this head. This repetition, and the waiting for her answer, having taken up time, have been the cause, that I could

not sooner do myself the honour of writing to you on this subject.

You will see, by the inclosed, her immoveable resolution, grounded on noble and high-soul'd motives, which I cannot but regret and applaud at the same time: *Applaud*, for the justice of her determination, which will confirm all your worthy house in the opinion you had conceived of her unequalled merit; and *regret*, because I have but too much reason to apprehend, as well by that, as by the report of a gentleman just come from her, that she is in such a declining way, as to her health, that her thoughts are very differently employed than on a continuance here.

The inclosed letter she thought fit to send to me unsealed, that, after I had perused it, I might forward it to you: And this is the reason it is superscribed by myself, and sealed with my seal. It is very full and peremptory; but as she had been pleased, in a letter to me, dated the 23d instant (as soon as she could hold a pen), to give me ampler reasons, why she could not comply with your pressing requests, as well as mine, I will transcribe some of the passages in that letter, which will give one of the wickedest men in the world (if he sees them) reason to think himself one of the unhappiest, in the loss of so incomparable a wife, as he might have gloried in, had he not been so superlatively wicked. These are the passages:

[See, for these passages, *Miss Harlowe's letter, No. lxvi.*  
dated July 23. marked with turn'd comma's, thus " ]

And now, ladies, you have before you my beloved friend's reasons for her refusal of a man unworthy of the relation he bears to so many excellent persons: And I will add (for I cannot help it), that, the merit and rank of the person considered, and the vile manner of his proceedings, there never was a greater villainy committed: And since she thinks her first and *only* fault cannot be expiated but by death, I pray to God daily, and will hourly from the moment I shall hear of that sad catastrophe, that He will be pleased to make him the subject of his vengeance, in some such way, as that all who know of his perfidious crime, may see the hand of Heaven in the punishment of it.

You will forgive me, ladies; I love not my own soul

better than I do Miss Clarissa Harlowe : And the distresses she has gone thro' ; and the persecutions she suffers from all her friends ; the curse she lies under, for his sake, from her implacable father ; her reduced health and circumstances, from high health and affluence ; and that execrable arrest and confinement, which have deepened all her other calamities (and which must be laid at his door, as the action of his vile agents, that, whether from his immediate orders or not, naturally flowed from his preceding baseness) ; the Sex dishonoured in the eye of the world, in the person of one of the greatest ornaments of it ; his unmanly methods, whatever they were (for I know not all as yet), of compassing her ruin ; all join to justify my warmth, and my execrations, against a man, whom I think excluded by his crimes from the benefit even of christian forgiveness — And were you to see all she writes, and the admirable talents she is mistress of, you yourselves would join to admire her, and execrate him, as I do.

Believe me to be, with a high sense of your merits,

*Dear Ladies,*

*Your most obedient humble Servant,*

*ANNA HOWE.*

## LETTER LXXXI.

*Mrs. NORTON, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.*

*My dearest young Lady,*

*Friday, July 28.*

I Have the consolation to tell you, that my son is once again in an hopeful way, as to his health. He desires his duty to you. He is very low and weak. And so am I. But this is the first time that I have been able, for several days past, to sit up to write, or I would not have been so long silent.

Your letter to your sister is received and answered. You have the answer by this time, I suppose. I wish it may be to your satisfaction : But am afraid it will not : For, by Betty Barnes, I find they were in a great ferment on receiving yours, and much divided whether it should be answered or not. They will not yet believe that you are so ill, as to my infinite concern, I find you are. What passed be-

tween Miss Harlowe and Miss Howe, as I feared, has been an aggravation.

I shewed Betty two or three passages in your letter to me; and she seemed moved, and said, She would report them favourably, and would procure me a visit from Miss Harlowe, if I would promise to shew the same to her. But I have heard no more of that.

Methinks, I am sorry you refuse the wicked man : But doubt not, nevertheless, that your motives for doing so, are righter, than my wishes that you would not. But as you would be resolved, as I may say, on life, if you gave way to such a thought ; and as I have so much interest in it ; I cannot forbear shewing this regard to myself, as to ask you, Cannot you, my dear young lady, get over your just resentments ? — But I dare say no more on this subject.

What a dreadful thing indeed was it for my dearest tender young lady to be arrested in the streets of London ! — How does my heart go over again for you, what yours must have suffered at that time ! — Yet this, to such a mind as yours, must be light, compared to what you had suffered before.

O my dearest Miss Clary, how shall we know what to pray for, when we pray for any thing, but that *God's will may be done*, and that we may be *resigned to it* ! — When at nine years old, and afterwards at eleven, you had a dangerous fever, how incessantly did we all grieve, and pray, and put up our vows to the throne of grace, for your recovery ! For all our lives were bound up in your life — Yet now, my dear, as it has proved (especially if we are soon to lose you) what a much more desirable event, both for you, and for us, had we *then* lost you !

A sad thing to say ! But as it is in pure love to you that I say it, and in full conviction, that we are not always fit to be our own choosers, I hope it may be excuseable ; and the rather, as the same reflection will naturally lead both you and me to acquiesce under the present dispensation ; since we are assured, that nothing happens by chance ; and that the greatest good may, for aught we know, be produced from the heaviest evils.

I am glad you are with such honest people ; and that  
you

you have all your effects restored—How dreadfully have you been used, that one should be glad of such a poor piece of justice as that?

Your talent at moving the passions is always hinted at; and this Betty of your sister's never comes near me, that she is not full of it. But, as you say, whom has it moved, that you *wished* to move? Yet, were it not for this unhappy notion, I am sure your mamma would relent. Forgive me, my dear Miss Clary; for I must try one way to be convinced if my opinion be not just. But I will not tell you what that is, unless it succeeds. I will try, in pure duty and love to *them*, as well as to *you*.

May Heaven be your support, in all your trials, is the constant prayer, my dearest young lady,

*Your ever-affectionate Friend and Servant,*

JUDITH NORTON.

## LETTER LXXXII.

Mrs. NORTON, To Mrs. HARLOWE.

Honoured Madam,

Friday, July 28.

B EING forbidden, without leave, to send you anything I might happen to receive from my beloved Miss Clary, and so ill, that I cannot attend to ask your leave, I give you this trouble, to let you know, that I have received a letter from her; which, I think, I should hereafter be held inexcuseable, as things may happen, if I did not desire permission to communicate it to you, and that as soon as possible.

Applications have been made to the dear young lady from Lord M. from the two ladies his sisters, and from both his nieces, and from the wicked man himself, to forgive and marry him. This, in noble indignation for the usage she has received from him, she has absolutely refused. And perhaps, Madam, if you and the honoured family should be of opinion, that to comply with their wishes is now the propereſt measure that can be taken, the circumstances of things may require your authority or advice, either to induce her to change her mind, or to confirm her in it.

I have reason to believe, that one motive for her refual, is her full conviction, that she shall not long be a trouble to

any-

any-body ; and so she would not give a husband a right to interfere with her family, in relation to the estate her grandfather bequeathed to her. But of this, however, I have not the least intimation from her. Nor would she, I dare say, mention it, *as a reason*, having still stronger to refuse him, from his vile treatment of her.

The letter I have received will shew how truly penitent the dear creature is ; and if I have your permission, I will send it sealed up, with a copy of mine, to which it is an answer. But as I resolve upon this step without her knowledge (and indeed I do), I will not acquaint her with it, unless it be attended with desirable effects : Because, otherwise, besides making me incur her displeasure, it might quite break her already half-broken heart.

I am, honoured Madam,

*Your dutiful and ever-obliged Servant,*

JUDITH NORTON.

## LETTER LXXXIII.

*Mrs. HARLOWE, To Mrs. JUDITH NORTON.*

*Sunday, July 30.*

WE all know your virtuous prudence, worthy woman ; we all do. But your partiality to this your rash favourite is likewise known. And we are no less acquainted with the unhappy body's power of painting her distresses so as to pierce a stone.

Every-one is of opinion, that the dear naughty creature is working about to be forgiven and received ; and for this reason it is, that Betty has been forbidden (Not by me, you may be sure !) to mention any more of her letters ; for she did speak to my Bella of some moving passages you read to her.

This will convince you, that nothing will be heard in her favour : To what purpose then, should I mention any thing about her ?—But you may be sure that I *will*, if I can have but one second. However, that is not at all likely, until we see what the *consequences* of her crime will be : And who can tell that ?—She may—How can I speak it, and my once darling daughter unmarried !—She may be with child !—This would perpetuate her stain. Her brother

ther may come to some harm ; which God forbid !—One child's ruin, I hope, will not be followed by another's murder !

As to her grief, and her present misery, whatever it be, she must bear with it ; and it must be short of what I hourly bear for her ! Indeed I am afraid nothing but her being at the last extremity of all will make her father, and her uncles, and her other friends, forgive her.

The easy pardon perverse children meet with, when they have done the rashest and most rebellious thing they can do, is the reason (*as is pleaded to us every day*), that so many follow their example. They depend upon the indulgent weakness of their parents tempers, and, in that dependence, harden their own hearts : And a little humiliation, when they have brought themselves into the fore-told misery, is to be a sufficient atonement for the greatest perverseness.

But for such a child as this (*I mention what others hourly say, but what I must sorrowfully subscribe to*) to lay plots and stratagems to deceive her parents, as well as herself; and to run away with a libertine ; Can there be any atonement for her crime ? And is she not answerable to God, to us, to you, and to all the world who knew her, for the abuse of such talents as *she* has abused ?

You say her heart is half-broken : Is it to be wondered at ? Was not her sin committed equally against warning, and the light of her own knowlege ?

That *he* would now marry her, or that *she* would refuse him, if she believed him in earnest, as she has circumstanced herself, is not at all probable ; and were I inclined to believe it, *no-body else* here would. He values not his relations ; and would deceive them as soon as any others : His aversion to marriage he has always openly declared ; and still occasionally declares it. But if he be now in earnest, which every one who knows him must doubt ; Which do you think (hating us too, as he professes to hate and despise us all) would be soonest to be chosen here, To hear of her death, or of her marriage with such a vile man ?

To all of us, yet, I cannot say ! For Oh ! my good Mrs. Norton, you know what a mother's tenderness for the child

child of her heart would make her choose, notwithstanding all that child's faults, rather than lose her for ever!

But I must fail with the tide; my own judgment also joining with it, or I should make the unhappiness of the more worthy still greater (my dear Mr. Harlowe's particularly); which is already more than enough to make them unhappy for the remainder of their days. This I know; If I were to oppose the rest, our son would fly out to find this libertine; and who could tell what would be the issue of that, with such a man of violence and blood, as that Lovelace is known to be?

All I can expect to prevail for her, is, that in a week, or so, Mr. Brand may be sent up to inquire privately about her present state, and way of life, and to see she is not altogether destitute: For nothing she writes herself will be regarded.

Her father indeed has, at her earnest request, withdrawn the curse, which, in a passion, he laid upon her, at her first wicked flight from us. But Miss Howe [It is a sad thing, Mrs. Norton, to suffer so many ways at once!] had made matters so difficult by her undue liberties with us all, as well by speech in all companies, as by letters written to my Bella, that we could hardly prevail upon him to hear her letter read.

These liberties of Miss Howe with us; the general cry against us abroad, where-ever we are spoken of; and the *visible* and not seldom, *audible* disrespectfulness, which high and low treat us with to our faces, as we go to and from church, and even *at* church (for no where else have we the heart to go), as if none of us had been regarded but upon her account; and as if she were innocent, we all in fault; are constant aggravations, you must needs think, to the whole family.

She has made my lot heavy, I am sure, that was far from being light before!—I am enjoined (to tell you truth) not to receive any thing of hers, from any hand, without leave. Should I therefore gratify my yearnings after her, so far as to receive privately the letter you mention, what would the case be, but to torment myself, without being able to do her good?—And were it to be known—Mr. Harlowe is *so* passionate—And should it throw his gout into

into his stomach, as her rash flight did—Indeed, indeed, I am very unhappy!—For Oh, my good woman, she is my child still!—But unless it were more in my power—Yet do I long to see the letter—You say it tells of her present way and circumstances.—The poor child, who ought to be in possession of thousands!—And *will*!—For her father will be a faithful steward for her.—But it must be in his own way, and at his own time.

And is she *really* ill?—so *very* ill?—But she *ought* to sorrow.—She has given a double measure of it.

But does she *really* believe she shall not *long* trouble us?—But Oh, my Norton!—She must, she *will* long trouble us—For can she think her death, if we should be deprived of her, will put an end to our afflictions?—Can it be thought, that the fall of such a child will not be regretted by us to the last hour of our lives?

But, in the letter you have, does she, without *reserve*, express her contrition? Has she in it no reflecting hints? Does she not aim at extenuations?—If I *were* to see it, will it not shock me so much, that my *apparent* grief may expose me to harshnesses?—Can it be contrived—

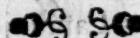
But to what purpose?—Don't send it—I charge you don't—I dare not see it—

Yet—

But, alas!—

O forgive the distracted-thoughted mother! You can.—You know how to allow for all this.—So I will let it go.—I will not write over again this part of my letter.

But I choose not to know more of her, than is communicated to us all—No more than I dare *own* I have seen—And what some of them may rather communicate *to* me, than receive *from* me: And this for the sake of my outward quiet: Altho' my inward peace suffers more and more by the compelled reserve.



I was forced to break off. But I will now try to conclude my long letter.

I am sorry you are ill. But if you were well, I could not, for your own sake, wish you to go up, as Betty tells us you long to do. If you *went*, nothing would be minded that came from you. As they already think you too par-

tial in her favour, your going up would confirm it, and do yourself prejudice, and her no good. And as every-body values you here, I advise you not to interest yourself too warmly in her favour, especially before my Bella's Betty, till I can let you know a *proper* time. Yet to forbid you to love the dear naughty creature, who can? O my Norton! you *must* love her!—And so must I!

I send you five guineas, to help you in your present illness, and your son's; for it must have lain heavy upon you. What a sad, sad thing, my dear good woman, that all *your* pains, and all *my* pains, for eighteen or nineteen years together, have, in so few months, been rendered thus deplorably vain! Yet I must be always your friend, and pity you, for the **very** reason that I myself deserve every one's pity.

Perhaps I may find an opportunity to pay you a visit, as in your illness, and then may weep over the letter you mention, with you. But, for the future, write nothing to me about the poor girl, that you think may not be communicated to us all.

And I charge you, as you value my friendship, as you wish my peace, not to say any-thing of a letter you have from me, either to the naughty-one, or to any-body else. It was some little relief (the occasion given) to write to you, who must, in so particular a manner, share my affliction. A mother, Mrs. Norton, cannot forget her child, tho' that child could abandon her mother; and, in so doing, run away with all her mother's comforts!—As I can truly say, is the case of

*Your unhappy Friend,*  
CHARLOTTE HARLOWE.

## LETTER LXXXIV.

*Miss CL. HARLOWE, To Mrs. JUDITH NORTON.*

Sat. July 29.

Congratulate you, my dear Mrs. Norton, with all my heart, on your son's recovery; which I pray to God, with your own health, to perfect.

I write in some hurry, being apprehensive of the consequence of the hints you give of some method you propose

pose to try in my favour (With my relations, I presume you mean): But you will not tell me what, you say, if it prove unsuccessful.

Now I must beg of you, that you will not take any step in my favour, with which you do not first acquaint me.

I have but one request to make to them, besides what is contained in my letter to my sister; and I would not, methinks, for their own future peace of mind's sake, that they should be teased so, by your well-meant kindness, and Miss Howe's, as to be put upon denying me that. And why should more be asked for me than I can partake of? More than is absolutely necessary for my own peace?

You suppose I should have my sister's answer to my letter, by the time yours reached my hand. I have it; and a severe one, a very severe one, it is. Yet, considering my fault in their eyes, and the provocations I am to suppose they so newly had from my dear Miss Howe, I am to look upon it as a favour, that it was answered at all. I will send you a copy of it soon; as also of mine, to which it is an answer.

I have reason to be very thankful, that my father has withdrawn that heavy malediction, which affected me so much—A parent's curse, my dear Mrs. Norton, what child could die in peace under a parent's curse; so literally fulfilled too, as this has been, in what relates to this life!

My heart is too full to touch upon the particulars of my sister's letter.—I can make but *one* atonement for my fault. May that be accepted! And may it soon be forgotten, by every dear relation, that there was such an unhappy daughter, sister, or niece, as Clarissa Harlowe!

My cousin Morden was one of those, who was so earnest in prayers for my recovery, at nine and eleven years of age, as you mention. My sister thinks he will be one of those, who will wish I never had a being. But pray, when he does come, let me hear of it with the first.

You think, that were it not for that unhappy notion of my moving talent, my mamma would relent. What would I give to see her once more, and, altho' unknown to her, to kiss but the hem of her garment!

Could I have thought, that the last time I saw her would have been the last, with what difficulty should I have been

torn from her embraced feet! — And when, skreen'd behind the yew-hedge on the 5th of April last (a), I saw my father, and my uncle Antony, and my brother and sister, how little did I think, that That would be the last time I should ever see them ; and, in so short a space, that so many dreadful evils would befall me !

But I can write nothing, but what must give you trouble. I will therefore, after repeating my desire, that you will not intercede for me, but with my previous consent, conclude with the assurance, that I am, and ever will be,

*Your most affectionate and dutiful*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

## LETTER LXXXV.

*Miss AR. HARLOWE, To Miss CL. HARLOWE.*

[*In Answer to hers of Friday, July 21. p. 249.]*

*O my unhappy lost Sister!* Thursday, July 27.

WHAT a miserable hand have you made of your romantic and giddy expedition ! I pity you at my heart !

You may well grieve and repent ! — Lovelace has left you ! — In what way or circumstances, you know best.

I wish your conduct had made your case more pitiable. But 'tis your own seeking !

God help you ! — For you have not a friend will look upon you ! — Poor, wicked, undone creature ! — Fallen, as you are, against warning, against expostulation, against duty !

But it signifies nothing to reproach you. I weep over you !

My poor mamma ! — Your rashness and folly have made her more miserable than *you* can be ! Yet she has besought my papa to grant your request.

My uncles joined with her ; for they thought there was a little more modesty in your letter, than in those of your pert advocate : And he is pleased to give me leave to write ; but only these words for him, and no more : " That " he withdraws the curse he laid upon you, at the first " hearing of your wicked flight, so far as it is in his " power

(a) Vol. ii. p. 226.

" power to do it ; and hopes that your present punishment  
 " may be all you will meet with. For the rest, He will  
 " never own you, nor forgive you ; and grieves he has  
 " such a daughter in the world."

All this, and more, you have deserved from him, and from all of Us : But what have you done to this abandoned libertine, to deserve what you have met with at his hands ?—I fear, I fear, sister !—But no more !—A blessed four months work have you made of it !

My brother is now at Edinburgh, sent thither by my father (tho' he knows not this to be the motive), that he may not meet this triumphant deluder.

We are told he would be glad to marry you : But why, then, did he abandon you ? He had kept you, till he was tired of you, no question ; and it is not likely he would wish to have you, but upon the terms you have already without all doubt been his.

You ought to advise your friend Miss Howe to concern herself less in your matters, than she does, except she could do it with more decency. She has written three letters to me : Very insolent ones. Your favourer, poor Mrs. Norton, thinks you know nothing of the pert creature's writing. I hope you don't. But then the more impudent the writer. But, believing the fond woman, I sat down the more readily to answer your letter, and write with less severity, than otherwise I should have done, if I had answered it at all.

Monday last was your Birth-day. Think, poor ingrateful wretch, as you are ! how we all used to keep it ; and you will not wonder to be told, that we ran away from one another that day. But God give you true penitence, if you have it not already ! And it will be true, if it be equal to the shame, and the sorrow, you have given us all.

*Your afflicted Sister,*

ARABELLA HARLOWE.

Your cousin Morden is every day expected in England. He, as well as others of the family, when he comes to hear what a blessed piece of work you have made of it, will wish you never had a being.

LET.

## LETTER LXXXVI.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Sunday, July 30.

YOU have given me great pleasure, my dearest friend, by your approbation of my reasonings, and of my resolution founded upon them, never to have Mr. Lovelace. This approbation is so *right* a thing, give me leave to say, from the nature of the case, and from the strict honour and true dignity of mind, which I always admired in my Anna Howe, that I could hardly tell to what, but to my evil destiny, that of late would not let me please anybody, to attribute the advice you gave me to the contrary.

But let not the ill state of my health, and what that may naturally tend to, sadden you. I have told you, that I will not run away from life, nor avoid the means that may continue it, if God see fit: And if he do *not*, who shall repine at his will?

If it shall be found, that I have not acted unworthy of your love, and of my own character, in my greater trials, that will be a happiness to both on reflection.

The shock which you so earnestly advise me to try to get over, was a shock, the greatest that I could receive. But, my dear, as it was not incurred by my *fault*, I hope I am already got above it. I hope I am!

I am more grieved (at times however) for *others*, than for *myself*. And so I ought. For as to *myself*, I cannot but reflect, that I have had an escape, rather than a loss, in missing Mr. Lovelace for a husband: Even had he *not* committed the vilest of all outrages.

Let any one, who knows my story, collect his character from his behaviour to *me*, before that outrage; and then judge, whether it was in the least probable for such a man to make me happy. But to collect his character from his principles, with regard to the *Sex in general*, and from his enterprizes upon many of them, and to consider the cruelty of his nature, and the sportiveness of his invention, together with the high opinion he has of himself, it will not be doubted, that a wife of his must have been miserable; and more miserable if she loved him, than if she could have been indifferent to him.

A

A twelvemonth might, very probably, have put a period to my life; situated as I was with my friends; persecuted and harassed as I had been by my brother and sister; and my very heart torn in pieces by the *wilful*, and, as it is now apparent, premeditated suspenses of the man, whose gratitude I wished to engage, and whose protection I was the more intitled to expect, as he had robbed me of every other, and, hating my own family, had reduced me to an absolute dependence upon himself. This once, as I thought, all his view; and uncomfortable enough for me, if it had been all.

Can it be thought, my dear, that my heart was not affected, happy as I was before I knew Mr. Lovelace, by such an unhappy change in my circumstances?—Nor, perhaps, was the wicked violence *wanting* to have cut short, tho' not so *very* short perhaps, a life that he has sported with.

Had I been his but a *month*, he must have possessed the estate on which my relations had set their hearts; the more to their regret, as they hated *him*, as much as he hated *them*.

Have I not reason, these things considered, to think myself happier without Mr. Lovelace, than with him?—My will too unviolated; and very little, nay, not anything, as to him, to reproach myself with?

But with my *relations* it is *otherwise*. They indeed deserve to be pitied. They are, and no doubt will long be, unhappy.

To judge of their resentments, and of their conduct, we must put ourselves in their situation:—And while *they* think me more in fault than themselves (whether my favourers are of their opinion, or not) and have a right to judge for themselves, they ought to have great allowances made for them; my parents especially. They stand at least *self-acquitted* (that cannot I); and the rather, as they can recollect, to their pain, their past indulgencies to me, and their unquestionable love.

Your partiality for the friend you so much value, will not easily let you come into this way of thinking. But only, my dear, be pleased to consider the matter in the following light.

Here was my MOTHER, one of the most prudent per-

sons of her Sex, married into a family, not perhaps so happily tempered as herself ; but every one of which she had the address, for a great while, absolutely to govern as she pleased by her directing wisdom, at the same time that they knew not but her prescriptions were the dictates of their own hearts ; such a sweet art had she of conquering by seeming to yield. Think, my dear, what must be the pride and the pleasure of such a mother, that in my brother she could give a son to the family she distinguished with her preferable love, not unworthy of their wishes ; a daughter, in my sister, of whom she had no reason to be ashamed ; and in me, a second daughter, whom every-body complimented (such was their partial favour to me) as being the still more immediate likeness of herself ? How, self-pleased, could she smile round upon a family she had so blessed ! What compliments were paid her upon the example she had given us, which were followed with such hopeful effects ! With what a noble confidence could she look upon her dear Mr. Harlowe, as a person made happy by her ; and be delighted to think, that nothing but purity streamed from a fountain so pure !

Now, my dear, reverse, as I daily do, this charming prospect. See my dear *mamma*, sorrowing in her closet ; endeavouring to suppress her sorrow at her table, and in those retirements where sorrow was before a stranger : Hanging down her pensive head : Smiles no more beaming over her benign aspect : Her virtue made to suffer for faults she could not be guilty of : Her patience continually tried (because she has more of it than any other) with repetitions of faults she is as much wounded by, as those can be from whom she so often hears of them : Taking to herself, as the fountain-head, a taint which only had infected one of the under-currents : Afraid to open her lips (were she willing) in my favour, lest it should be thought she has any byas in her own mind to failings that never otherwise could have been suspected in her : Robbed of that conscious merit, which the mother of hopeful children may glory in : Every one who visits her, or is visited by her, by dumb shew, and looks that mean more than words can express, condoling where they used to congratulate : The affected silence wounding : The compassionating

passionate look reminding: The half-suppressed sigh in them, calling up deeper sighs from her; and their averted eyes, endeavouring to restrain the rising tear, provoking tears from her, that will not be restrained.

When I consider these things, and, added to these, the pangs that tear in pieces my FATHER's stronger heart, because it cannot relieve itself by those tears which carry the torturing grief to the eyes of softer spirits: The overboiling tumults of my impatient and uncontrollable BROTHER, piqued to the heart of his honour, in the fall of a sister, in whom he once gloried: The pride of an ELDER SISTER, who had given unwilling way to the honours paid over her head to one born after her: And, lastly, the dishonour I have brought upon Two UNCLES, who each contended which should most favour their then happy niece: When, I say, I reflect upon my fault in these strong, yet just lights, what room can there be to censure any-body but my unhappy self? And how much reason have I to say, *If I justify myself, mine own heart shall condemn me: If I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse?*

Here permit me to lay down my pen for a few moments.



You are very obliging to me, *intentionally*, I know, when you tell me, It is in my power to hasten the day of Mr. Hickman's happiness. But yet, give me leave to say, that I admire this kind assurance less than any other paragraph of your letter.

In the first place, you know it is *not* in my power to say when I can dismiss my physician; and you should not put the celebration of a marriage intended by yourself, and so desirable to your mother, upon so precarious an issue. Nor will I accept of a compliment, which must mean a slight to her.

If any-thing could give me a relish for life, after what I have suffered, it would be the hopes of the continuance of the more than sisterly love, which has, for years, uninterrupted bound us together as one mind.—And why, my dear, should you defer giving (by a tie still stronger) another friend to one, who has so few?

I am glad you have sent my letter to Miss Montague. I hope I shall hear no more of this unhappy man.

I had

I had begun the particulars of my tragical story : But it is so painful a task, and I have so many more important things to do, and, as I apprehend, so little time to do them in, that, could I avoid it, I would go no farther in it.

Then, to this hour, I know not by what means several of his machinations to ruin me were brought about ; so that some material parts of my sad story must be defective, if I were to sit down to write it. But I have been thinking of a way that will answer the end wished for by your mother and you full as well ; perhaps better.

Mr. Lovelace, it seems, has communicated to his friend Mr. Belford all that has passed between himself and me, as he went on. Mr. Belford has not been able to deny it. So that (as we may observe by the way) a poor young creature, whose indiscretion has given a libertine power over her, has a reason, *she little thinks of*, to regret her folly ; since these wretches, who have no more honour in one point than in another, scruple not to make her weakness a part of their triumph to their brother libertines.

I have nothing to apprehend of this sort, if I have the justice done me in his letters, which Mr. Belford assures me that I have : And therefore the particulars of my story, and the base arts of this vile man, will, I think, be best collected from those very letters of his (if Mr. Belford can be prevailed upon to communicate them) ; to which I dare appeal with the same truth and fervor as he did, who says,

*—O that one would hear me ! and that mine adversary had written a book ! —Surely, I would take it upon my shoulders, and bind it to me as a crown ! For I covered not my transgressions as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity in my bosom.*

There is one way, which may be fallen upon to induce Mr. Belford to communicate these letters ; since he seems to have (and declares he always had) a sincere abhorrence of his friend's baseness to me : But that, you'll say, when you hear it, is a strange one. Nevertheless, I am very earnest upon it, at present.

It is no other than this :

I think to make Mr. Belford the Executor of my last will (Don't be surprised !) : And with this view I permit his visits with the less scruple : And every time I see him, from his concern for me, am more and more inclined to

do so. If I hold in the same mind, and if he accept the trust, and will communicate the materials in his power, those, joined with what you can furnish, will answer the whole end.

I know you will start at my notion of such an Executor: But pray, my dear, consider, in my present circumstances, what I can do better, as I am empowered to make a will, and have considerable matters in my own disposal.

Your mother, I am sure, would not consent that *you* should take this office upon you. It might subject *Mr. Hickman* to the insults of that violent man. *Mrs. Norton* cannot, for several reasons respecting herself. My *Brother* looks upon what I ought to have, as his right: My *uncle Harlowe* is already my trustee, with my *cousin Morden*, for the estate my grandfather left me: But you see I could not get from my own family the few pieces I left behind me at *Harlowe-Place*; and my *uncle Antony* once threatened to have my grandfather's will controverted. My *Father!*—To be sure, my dear, I could not expect that my *Father* would do all I wish should be done: And a *will* to be executed by a father for a daughter (parts of it, perhaps, absolutely against his own judgment) carries somewhat daring and prescriptive in the very *word*.

If, indeed, my *cousin Morden* were to come in time, and would undertake this trust—But even *him* it might subject to hazards; and the more, as he is a man of great spirit; and as the other man (of *as great*) looks upon me (unprotected as I have long been) as his property.

Now *Mr. Belford* knows, as I have already mentioned, every-thing that has passed. He is a man of spirit, and, it seems, as fearless as the other, with more humane qualities. You don't know, my dear, what instances of sincere humanity this *Mr. Belford* has shewn, not only on occasion of the cruel arrest, but on several occasions since. And *Mrs. Lovick* has taken pains to inquire after his general character; and hears a very good one of him, for justice and generosity in all his concerns of *Meum* and *Tuum*, as they are called: He has a knowlege of law-matters; and has two executorships upon him at this time, in the discharge of which his honour is unquestioned.

All these reasons have already in a manner determined  
me

me to ask this favour of him ; altho' it will have an odd found with it, to make an intimate friend of Mr. Lovelace my Executor.

This is certain : My brother will be more acquiescent a great deal in such a case with the articles of my will, as he will see that it will be to no purpose to controvert some of them, which else, I dare say, he would controvert, or persuade my other friends to do so. And who would involve an Executor in a Law-suit, if they could help it ? Which would be the case, if any-body were left, whom my brother could hope to awe or controul ; since my father (who is governed by him) has possession of all : Nor would I wish, you may believe, to have effects torn out of my father's hands : While Mr. Belford, who is a man of fortune (and a good oeconomist in his own affairs), would have no interest but to do justice.

Then he exceedingly presses for some occasion to shew his readiness to serve me : And he would be able to manage his violent friend, over whom he has more influence than any other person.

But, after all, I know not, if it were not more eligible by far, that my story should be forgotten as soon as possible ; and myself too. And of this I shall have the less doubt, if the character of my parents cannot be guarded (You will forgive me, my dear) from the unqualified bitterness, which, from your affectionate zeal for me, has sometimes mingled with your ink. A point that ought, and (I insist upon it) must be well considered of, if any-thing be done which your mother and you are desirous should be done.

My father has been so good as to take off from me the heavy malediction he laid me under. I must be now solicitous for a last blessing ; and that is all I shall presume to ask. My sister's letter, communicating this grace, is a severe one. But as she writes to me as *from every-body*, how could I expect it to be otherwise ?

If you set out to-morrow, this letter cannot reach you till you get to your aunt Harman's. I shall therefore direct it thither, as Mr. Hickman instructed me.

I hope you will have met with no inconveniences in your little journey and voyage ; and that you will have found in good health all whom you wish to see well.

Let me recommend to you, my dear, that, if your friends and relations in the little Island join their solicitations with your mother's commands, to have your nuptials celebrated before you leave them, you do not refuse to oblige them. How grateful will the notification that you have done so, be to

*Your ever-faithful and affectionate*

CL. HARLOWE!

## LETTER LXXXVII.

*Miss CL. HARLOWE, To Miss HARLOWE.*

*Saturday, July 29.*

I Repine not, my dear sister, at the severity you have been pleased to express in the letter you favoured me with; because that severity was accompanied with the grace I had petitioned for: And because the reproaches of my own heart are stronger than any other person's reproaches can be; altho' I am not half so culpable as I am imagined to be; as would be allowed, if all the circumstances of my unhappy story were known; and which I shall be ready to communicate to Mrs. Norton, if she be commissioned to inquire into them; or to you, my sister, if you can have patience to hear them.

I remembred with a bleeding heart what day the 24th of July was. I began with the eve of it; and I passed the day itself—as it was fit I should pass it. Nor have I any comfort to give to my dear and ever-honoured father and mother, and to you, my Bella, but This—That, as it was the first *unhappy* anniversary of my birth, in all probability, it will be the *last*.

Believe me, my dear sister, I say not this, merely to move compassion; but from the *best* grounds: And as I think it of the highest importance to my peace of mind, to obtain one further favour, I would choose to owe to your intercession, as my sister, the leave I beg, to address half a dozen lines, with the hope of having them answered as I wish, to either or to both my honoured parents, to beg their *last blessing*.

This blessing is all the favour I have now to ask: It is all I dare to ask: Yet am afraid to rush at once, tho' by *letter*, into

into the presence of either. And if I did not ask it, it might seem to be owing to stubbornness and want of duty, when my heart is all humility and penitence. Only, be so good as to embolden me to attempt this task : Write but this one line, " Clary Harlowe, you are at liberty to write as you " desire." This will be enough — And shall, to my last hour be acknowledged as the greatest favour, by

*Your truly penitent Sister,*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

### LETTER LXXXVIII.

*Mrs. Norton, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.*

*My dearest young Lady,* Monday, July 31.

I Must indeed own, that I took the liberty to write to your mamma, offering to inclose to her, if she gave me leave, yours of the 24th: By which I thought she would see what was the state of your mind ; what the nature of your last troubles was, from the wicked arrest ; what the people are where you lodge ; what proposals were made you from Lord M.'s family ; also your sincere penitence ; and how much Miss Howe's writing to them, in the terms she wrote in, disturbed you — But, as you have taken the matter into your own hands, and forbid me, in your last, to act in this nice affair unknown to you, I am glad the letter was *not required of me* : And indeed it may be better that the matter lie wholly between you and them ; since my affection for you is thought to proceed from partiality.

They would choose, no doubt, that you should owe to themselves, and not to my humble mediation, the favour you so earnestly sue for, and which I would not have you despair of : For I will venture to assure you, that your mother is ready to take the first opportunity to shew her maternal tenderness for you : And this I gather from several hints I am not at liberty to explain myself upon.

I long to be with you, now I am better, and now my son is in a fine way of recovery. But is it not hard, to have it signified to me, that at present it will not be taken well, if I go ? — I suppose, while the reconciliation, which I hope will take place, is negotiating by means of the cor-

respondence so newly opened between you and your sister. But if you would have me come, I will rely on my good intentions, and risque every-one's displeasure.

Mr. Brand has business in town, to solicit for a benefice which it is expected the incumbent will be obliged to quit for a better preferment: And when there, he is to inquire privately after your way of life, and of your health.

He is a very officious young man; and, but that your uncle Harlowe (who has chosen him for this errand) regards him as an oracle, your mother had rather any-body else had been sent.

He is one of those puzzling, over-doing gentlemen, who think they see farther into matters than any-body else, and are fond of discovering mysteries where there are none, in order to be thought a shrewd man.

I can't say I like him, either in the pulpit, or out of it: I who had a father one of the soundest divines, and finest scholars, in the kingdom; who never made an ostentation of what he knew; but loved and venerated the gospel he taught, preferring it to all other learning; to be obliged to hear a young man depart from his text as soon as he has named it (so contrary, too, to the example set him by his learned and worthy principal (*a*), when his health permits him to preach), and throwing about, to a Christian and Country audience, scraps of Latin and Greek from the pagan classics; and not always brought in with great propriety neither (if I am to judge, by the only way given me to judge of them, by the English he puts them into); is an indication of something wrong, either in his head, or his heart, or both; for, otherwise, his education at the University must have taught him better. You know, my dear Miss Clary, the honour I have for the Cloth: It is owing to *that*, that I say what I do.

I know not the day he is to set out; and as his inquiries are to be private, be pleased to take no notice of this intelligence. I have no doubt, that your life and conversation are such, as may defy the scrutinies of the most officious inquirer.

I am just now told, that you have written a second letter

(*a*) Dr. Lewin.

ter to your sister : But am afraid they will wait for Mr. Brand's report, before further favour will be obtained from them ; for they will not yet believe you are so ill, as I fear you are.

But you would soon find, that you have an indulgent mother, were she at liberty to act according to her own inclination. And this gives me great hopes, that all will end well at last : For I verily think you are in the right way to a reconciliation : God give a blessing to it, and restore your health, and you to all your friends, prays

*Your ever-affectionate Servant,*

JUDITH NORTON.

Your good mamma has privately sent me five guineas :

She is pleased to say, to help us in the illness we have been afflicted with ; but, more likely, that I might send them to you, as from myself. I hope, therefore, I may send them up, with ten more I have still left. I will send you word of Mr. Morden's arrival, the moment I know it.

If agreeable, I should be glad to know all that passes between your relations and you.

## LETTER LXXXIX.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Mrs. NORTON.*

*Wednesday, Aug. 2.*

YOU give me, my dear Mrs. Norton, great pleasure in hearing of yours and your son's recovery. May you continue, for many, many years, a blessing to each other !

You tell me, that you did actually write to my mamma, offering to inclose mine of the 24th past : And you say, It was not required of you. That is to say, altho' you cover it over as gently as you could, that your offer was rejected ; which makes it evident, that no plea will be heard for me. Yet, you bid me hope, that the grace I sued for would, *in time*, be granted.

The grace I then sued for was indeed granted : But you are afraid, you say, that they will wait for Mr. Brand's report, before favour will be obtained in return to the second letter, which I wrote to my sister : And you add,

That I have an indulgent mamma, were she at liberty to act according to her own inclination; and that all will end well at last.

But what, my dear Mrs. Norton, what is the grace I sue for in my second letter? — It is not that they will receive me into favour— If they think it is, they are mistaken. I do not, I cannot expect that: Nor, as I have often said, should I, if they *would* receive me, bear to live in the eye of those dear friends whom I have so grievously offended. 'Tis only, simply, a blessing I ask: A blessing to *die* with; not to *live* with.—Do they know that? And do they know, that their unkindness will perhaps shorten my date? So that their favour, if ever they intend to grant it, may come too late?

Once more, I desire you not to think of coming to me. I have no uneasiness now, but what proceeds from the apprehension of seeing a man I would not see for the world, if I could help it; and from the severity of my nearest and dearest relations: A severity intirely their own, I doubt; for you tell me, that my brother is at Edinburgh! You would therefore heighten their severity, and make yourself enemies besides, if you were to come to me— Don't you see that you would?

Mr. Brand may come, if he will. He is a Clergyman, and must mean well; or I must think so, let him say of me what he will. All my fear is, that, as he knows I am in disgrace with a family whose esteem he is desirous to cultivate; and as he has obligations to my uncle Harlowe, and to my father; he will be but a languid acquitter. Not that I am afraid of what he, or any-body in the world, can hear as to my conduct. You may, my beloved and dear friend, indeed you may, rest satisfied, that That is such as may warrant me to challenge the inquiries of the most officious.

I will send you copies of what passes, as you desire, when I have an answer to my second letter. I now begin to wish, that I had taken the heart to write to my father himself; or to my mother, at least; instead of to my sister; and yet I doubt my poor mother can do nothing for me of herself. A strong confederacy, my dear Mrs. Norton, (a strong confederacy indeed!) against a poor girl, their daughter,

ter, sister, niece! — My brother, perhaps, got it renewed, before he left them. He needed not—His work is done; and more than done.

Don't afflict yourself about money-matters on my account. I have no occasion for money. I am glad my mother was so considerate to you. I was in pain for you, on the same subject. But Heaven will not permit so good a woman to want the humble blessings she was always satisfied with. I wish every individual of our family were but as rich as you! — O my mamma Norton, you are rich; You are rich indeed! — The true riches are such content as you are blessed with. — And I hope in God, that I am in the way to be rich too.

Adieu, my ever-indulgent friend. You say, all will be at last happy — And I *know* it will — I confide that it will, with as much security, as you may, that I will be to my last hour,

*Your ever-grateful and affectionate  
CL. HARLOWE.*

## LETTER XC.

*Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;*

*Tuesday, Aug. 1.*

AM most confoundedly chagrined and disappointed: For here, on Saturday, arrived a messenger from Miss Howe, with a letter to my cousins (*a*); which I knew nothing of till yesterday; when my two aunts were procured to be here, to sit in judgment upon it with the old Peer, and my two kinswomen. And never was Bear so miserably baited as thy poor friend! — And for what? — Why, for the cruelty of Miss Harlowe: For have I committed any *new* offence? And would I not have succeeded in her favour, upon her own terms, if I could? And is it fair to punish me for what is my misfortune, and not my fault? Such event-judging fools as I have for my relations! I am ashamed of them all.

In that of Miss Howe was inclosed one to *her* from Miss Harlowe (*b*), to be sent to my cousins, containing a final rejection of me; and that in very vehement and positive terms;

P 6 yet

(*a*) See Letter lxxx. p. 296.

(*b*) See Letter lxxvi. p. 278.

yet pretends, that in this rejection she is governed more by principle than passion—(Damn'd lye, as ever was told!) And, as a proof that she is, says, that she can forgive me, and does, on this one condition, That I will never molest her more: The whole letter so written, as to make herself more admired, me more detested.

What we have been told of the agitations and workings, and sighings and sobbings, of the French prophets among us formerly, were nothing at all to the scene exhibited by these maudlin souls, at the reading of these letters; and of some affecting passages extracted from another of my fair Implacable's to Miss Howe—Such lamentations for the loss of so charming a relation! Such applaudings of her virtue, of her exaltedness of soul and sentiment! Such menaces of disinherisons! I, not needing their reproaches to be stung to the heart with my own reflections, and with the rage of disappointment; and as sincerely as any of them admiring her—What the devil, cried I, is all this for? — Is it not enough to be despised and rejected? Can I help her implacable spirit? — Would I not repair the evils I have made her suffer? — Then was I ready to curse them all, herself and Miss Howe, for company—And heartily I swore, that she should yet be mine.

I now swear it over-again to thee—Were her death to follow in a week after the knot is ty'd, by the Lord of Heaven, it shall be ty'd, and she shall die a Lovelace.—Tell her so, if thou wilt: But, at the same time, tell her, that I have no view to her fortune; and that I will solemnly resign that, and all pretensions to it, in whose favour she pleases, if she resign life issueless.—I am not so low-minded a wretch, as to be guilty of any sordid views to her fortune: Let her judge for herself then, whether it be not for her honour rather to leave this world a Lovelace than a Harlowe.

But do not think I will intirely rest a cause so near my heart, upon an advocate, who so much more admires his client's adversary, than his client. I will go to town in a few days, in order to throw myself at her feet: Bringing with me, or having at hand, a resolute, well-prepared parson; and the ceremony shall be performed, let what will be the consequence.

But

But if she will permit me to attend her for this purpose, at either of the churches mentioned in the licence (which she has by her, and, thank Heaven! has not returned me with my letters); then will I not disturb her; but meet her at the altar in either church, and will engage to bring my two cousins to attend her, and even Lady Sarah and Lady Betty, and my Lord M. in person, to give her to me.

Or, if it will be still more agreeable to her; I will undertake, that either or both my aunts shall go to town, and attend her down; and the marriage shall be celebrated in theirs and Lord M.'s presence, here, or elsewhere, at her own choice.

Do not play me booty, Belford; but sincerely and warmly use all the eloquence thou art master of, to prevail upon her to choose one of these three methods. One of them she *must* choose — By my soul, she must.

Here is Charlotte tapping at my closet-door for admittance. What a devil wants Charlotte? — I will bear no more reproaches! — Come in, girl!



My cousin Charlotte, finding me writing on with too much earnestness to have any regard for politeness to her, and guessing at my subject, besought me to let her see what I had written.

I obliged her. And she was so highly pleased on seeing me so much in earnest, that *she* offered, and I accepted her offer, to write herself to Miss Harlowe; with permission to treat me in it as she thought fit.

I shall inclose a copy of her letter.

When she *had* written it, she brought it to me, with apologies for the freedom taken with me in it: But I excused it; and she was ready to give me a kiss for joy of my approbation: And I gave her two for writing it; telling her, I had hopes of success from it; and that I thought she had luckily hit it off.

Every-one approves of it, as well as I, and is pleased with me, for so patiently submitting to be abused, and undertaken for. — If it do not succeed, all the blame will be thrown upon the dear creature's perverseness: Her charitable or forgiving disposition, about which she makes such a parade, will be justly questioned; and the pity of which

which she is now in full possession, will be transferred to me.

Putting therefore my whole confidence in this letter, I postpone all my other alternatives, as also my going to town, till my empress send an answer to my cousin Montague.

But if she persist, and will not promise to take time to consider of the matter, thou mayest communicate to her what I had written, as above, before my cousin entered; and, if she be still perverse, assure her, that I *must* and *will* see her— But this with all honour, all humility: And, if I cannot move her in my favour, I will then go abroad, and perhaps never more return to England.

I am sorry thou art, at *this critical time*, so busily employed, as thou informest me thou art, in thy Watford affairs, and in preparing to do Belton justice. If thou wantest my assistance in the latter, command me. Tho' engrossed and plagued as I am, with this perverse beauty, I will obey thy first summons.

I have great dependence upon thy zeal and thy friendship: Hasten back to her, therefore, and resume a task so interesting to me, that it is equally the subject of my dreams, as of my waking hours.

## LETTER XCI.

*Miss MONTAGUE, To Miss CLAR. HARLOWE.*

*Dearest Madam,*

*Tuesday, Aug. 1.*

ALL our family is deeply sensible of the injuries you have received at the hands of one of it, whom You only can render in any manner worthy of the relation he stands in to us all: And if, as an act of mercy and charity, the greatest your pious heart can shew, you will be pleased to look over his past wickedness and ingratitude, and suffer yourself to be our kinswoman, you will make us the happiest family in the world: And I can engage, that Lord M. and Lady Sarah Sadleir, and Lady Betty Lawrance, and my Sister, who are all admirers of your virtues, and of your nobleness of mind, will for ever love and reverence you, and do every-thing in all our powers to make you amends for what you have suffered from Mr. Lovelace.

lace. This, Madam, we should not, however, dare to petition for, were we not assured, that he is most sincerely sorry for his past vileness to you ; and that he will, on his knees, beg your pardon, and vow eternal love and honour to you.

Wherefore, *my dearest cousin* (How you will charm us all, if this agreeable style may be permitted!) for *all* our sakes, for his *soul's* sake (You must, I am sure, be so good a lady, as to wish to save a soul !), and allow me to say, for *your own fame's* sake, condescend to our joint requests : And if, by way of encouragement, you will but say, you will be glad to see, and to be as much known personally, as you are by fame, to Charlotte Montague, I will, in two days time from the receipt of your permission, wait upon you, *with or without* my sister, and receive your further commands.

Let me, *our dearest cousin* (we cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of calling you so), let me intreat you to give me your permission for my journey to London ; and put it in the power of Lord M. and of the Ladies of the family, to make you what reparation they can make you, for the injuries which a person of the greatest merit in the world has received from one of the most audacious men in it ; and you will infinitely oblige us all ; and particularly her, who repeatedly presumes to style herself,

*Your affectionate cousin, and obliged Servant,*  
CHARLOTTE MONTAGUE.

## LETTER XCII.

*Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;*

*Thursday morning, Aug. 3. six o'clock.*

I Have been so much employed in my own and Belton's affairs, that I could not come to town till last night ; having contented myself with sending to Mrs. Lovick, to know, from time to time, the state of the lady's health ; of which I received but very indifferent accounts, owing, in a great measure, to letters or advices brought her from her implacable family.

I have now completed my own affairs ; and, next week, shall go to Epsom, to endeavour to put Belton's sister into possession

possession of his own house, for him : After which, I shall devote myself wholly to your service, and to that of the lady.

I was admitted to her presence last night ; and found her visibly altered for the worse. When I went home, I had your letter of Tuesday last put into my hands. Let me tell thee, Lovelace, that I insist upon the performance of thy engagement to me that thou wilt not personally molest her.

*Mr. Belford dates again on Thursday morning 10 o'clock; and gives an account of a conversation which he had just held with the lady, upon the subject of Miss Montague's letter to her, preceding, and upon Mr. Lovelace's alternatives, as mentioned in Letter No. XC. which Mr. Belford supported with the utmost earnestness. But, as the result of this conversation will be found in the subsequent letters, Mr. Belford's pleas and arguments, and the lady's answers, are omitted.*

## LETTER XCIII.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss MONTAGUE.*

Dear Madam,

Thursday, Aug. 3.

I AM infinitely obliged to you for your kind and condescending letter. A letter, however, which heightens my regrets, as it gives me a new instance of what a happy creature I might have been in an alliance so much approved of by such worthy Ladies ; and which, on their accounts, and on that of Lord M. would have been so reputable to myself, and once so desirable.

But indeed, indeed, Madam, my heart sincerely repulses the man, who, descended from such a family, could be guilty, *first*, of such premeditated violence as he has been guilty of ; and, as he knows, *further* intended me, on the night previous to the day he set out for Berkshire ; and, *next*, pretending to spirit, be so mean, as to wish to lift into that family a person he was capable of abasing into a companionship with the most abandoned of her Sex.

Allow me then, dear Madam, to declare with fervour, that I think I never could deserve to be ranked with the

Ladies

Ladies of a family so splendid and so noble, if, by vowing love and honour at the altar to such a violator, I could sanctify, as I may say, his unprecedented and elaborate wickedness.

Permit me, however, to make one request to my good Lord M. and to the two Ladies his Lordship's sisters, and to your kind self, and your sister—It is, That you will all be pleased to join your authority and interests to prevail upon Mr. Lovelace not to molest me further.

Be pleased to tell him, That, if I am designed for *life*, it will be very cruel in him to attempt to hunt me out of it; for I am determined never to see him more, if I can help it. The more cruel, because he knows, that I have nobody to protect me from him: Nor do I wish to engage any-body to *his* hurt, or to their own.

If I am, on the other hand, destined for *death*, it will be no less cruel, if he will not permit me to die in peace—Since a peaceable and happy end I wish him. Indeed I do.

Every worldly good attend you, dear Madam, and every branch of the honourable family, is the wish of one, whose misfortune it is, that she is obliged to disclaim any other title, than That of,

Dear Madam,  
Your and Their obliged and faithful Servant,  
CLARISSA HARLOWE.

### LETTER XCIV.

Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

Thursday afternoon, Aug. 3.

I AM just now agreeably surprised by the following letter, delivered into my hands by a messenger from the lady. The letter she mentions, as inclosed (*a*), I have returned, without taking a copy of it. The contents of it will soon be communicated to you, I presume, by another way. They contain an absolute rejection of thee—*Poor Lovelace!*—

To

(*a*) See *Miss Montague's Letter preceding.*

*To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;**SIR,**Aug. 3.*

**Y**OU have frequently offered to oblige me in anything that shall be within your power: And I have such an opinion of you, as to be willing to hope you meant me, at the times, more than mere compliment.

I have therefore two requests to make to you; the first I will now mention; the other, if this shall be comply'd with, otherwise not.

It behoves me to leave behind me such an account as may clear up my conduct to several of my friends who will not at present concern themselves about me: And Miss Howe, and her mother, are very solicitous that I will do so.

I am apprehensive, that I shall not have time to do this; and you will not wonder, that I have less and less inclination to set about such a painful task; especially as I find myself unable to look back with patience on what I have suffered; and shall be too much discomposed by it, to proceed with the requisite temper in a task of still greater importance, which I have before me.

It is very evident to me, that your wicked friend has given you, from time to time, a circumstantial account of all his behaviour *to* me, and devices *against* me; and you have more than once assured me, that, both by writing and speech, he has done my character all the justice I could wish for.

Now, Sir, if I may have a fair, a faithful specimen from his letters or accounts to you, upon some of the most interesting occasions, I shall be able to judge, whether there will or will not be a necessity for me, for my honour's sake, to enter upon the solicited task.

You may be assured, from my inclosed answer to the letter which Miss Montague has honoured me with (and which you'll be pleased to return me as soon as read), that it is impossible for me ever to think of your friend, in the way I am importuned to think of him: He cannot therefore receive any detriment from the requested specimen: And I give you my honour, that no use shall be made of it to his prejudice, in Law, or otherwise. And that it

may

may not, after I am no more, I assure you, that it is a main part of my view, that the passages you shall oblige me with shall be always in your own power, and not in that of any other person.

If, Sir, you think fit to comply with my request, the passages I would wish to be transcribed (making neither better nor worse of the matter), are those which he has written to you, on or about the 7th and 8th of June, when I was alarmed by the wicked pretence of a fire; and what he has written from Sunday June 11. to the 19th. And in doing this you will much oblige

Your humble Servant,  
CL. HARLOWE.

Now, Lovelace, since there are no hopes for thee of her returning favour; Since some praise may lie for thy ingenuity, having never offered (as more diminutive-minded libertines would have done) to palliate thy crimes, by aspersing the lady, or her sex; Since she may be made easier by it; Since thou must fare better from thy own pen, than from hers; and, finally, Since thy actions have manifested, that thy letters are not the most guilty part of what she knows of thee; I see not why I may not oblige her, upon her honour, and under the restrictions, and for the reasons she has given; and this without breach of the confidence due to friendly communications; especially, as I might have added, *Since thou gloriest in thy pen, and in thy wickedness, and canst not be ashamed.*

But, be this as it may, she will be obliged before thy remonstrances or clamours against it can come; so, pr'ythee now, make the best of it, and rave not; except for the sake of a pretence against me, and to exercise thy talent of execration!—And, if thou likest to do so for these reasons, rave and welcome.

I long to know what the second request is: But this I know, that if it be any-thing less than cutting thy throat, or endangering my own neck, I will certainly comply; and be proud of having it in my power to oblige her.

And now I am actually going to be busy in the Extracts.

L E T-

## LETTER XCV.

*Mr. BELFORD, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.*

*Madam,*

*Aug. 3, 4.*

YOU have engaged me to communicate to you, upon honour (making neither better nor worse of the matter), what Mr. Lovelace has written to me, in relation to yourself, in the period preceding your going to Hamstead, and in that between the 11th and 19th of June. And you assure me, you have no view in this request, but to see if it be necessary for you, from the account he gives, to touch the painful subjects yourself, for the sake of your own character.

Your commands, Madam, are of a very delicate nature, as they may seem to affect the secrets of private friendship: But as I know you are not capable of a view, the motives to which you will not own; and as I think the communication may do some credit to my unhappy friend's character, as an *ingenuous* man; tho' his actions by the most excellent woman in the world have lost him all title to that of an *honourable* one; I obey you with the greater cheerfulness.

*He then proceeds with his extracts, and concludes them with an address to her in his friend's behalf, in the following words:*

' And now, Madam, I have fulfilled your commands;  
 ' and, I hope, not dis-served my friend with you; since  
 ' you will hereby see the justice he does to your virtue in  
 ' every line he writes. He does the same in all his letters,  
 ' tho' to his own condemnation: And give me leave to  
 ' add, that if this ever-amiable sufferer could but think it  
 ' in any manner consistent with her honour to receive his  
 ' vows at the altar, on his truly penitent turn of mind, I  
 ' have not the least doubt, but that he would make her the  
 ' best and tenderest of husbands. What obligation would  
 ' not the admirable lady hereby lay upon all *his* noble fa-  
 ' mily, who so greatly admire her! and, I will presume  
 ' to say, upon *her own*, when the unhappy family aver-  
 ' sion (which certainly has been carried to an unreasonable  
 ' height

' height against him) is got over, and a general reconciliation take place! For who is it, that would not give these two admirable persons to each other, were not his ' morals an objection?'

However this be, I would humbly refer to you, Madam, whether, as you will be mistress of very delicate particulars from *me* his friend, you should not in honour think yourself concerned to pass them by, as if you had never seen them; and not to take any advantage of the communication, not even in argument, as some perhaps might lie, with respect to the *premeditated* design he seems to have had, not against you, *as you*; but as against the *Sex*; over whom (I am sorry I can bear witness myself) it is the villainous aim of all libertines to triumph: And I would not, if any misunderstanding should arise between him and me, give him room to reproach me, that his losing of you, or (thro' his usage of you) his losing of his own friends, were owing to what perhaps he would call breach of trust, were he to judge rather by the events, if such should happen, than by my intention.

I am, Madam, with the most profound veneration,  
*Your most faithful humble Servant,*

J. BELFORD.

## LETTER XCVI.

*Miss CL. HARLOWE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;*

SIR,

Friday, Aug. 4.

I hold myself extremely obliged to you for your communications. I will make no use of them, that you shall have reason to reproach either yourself or me with. I wanted no new lights to make the unhappy man's premeditated baseness to me unquestionable, as my answer to Miss Montague's letter might convince you (*a*).

I must own in his favour, that he has observed some decency in his accounts to you of the most indecent and shocking actions. And if all his strangely-communicative narrations are equally decent, nothing will be rendered criminally odious by them, but the vile heart that could meditate such contrivances as were much stronger evidences of his inhumanity, than of his wit: Since men of very

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(a) See Letter xciii.

contemptible parts and understanding may succeed in the vilest attempts, if they can get above regarding the moral sanctions which bind man to man; and sooner upon an innocent heart, than upon any other; because, knowing its own integrity, it is the less apt to suspect that of others.

I find I have had great reason to think myself obliged to your intention in the whole progress of my sufferings. It is, however, impossible, Sir, to miss the natural inference on this occasion, that lies against his predetermined baseness. But I say the less, because you shall not think I borrow from your communications aggravations that are not needed.

And now, Sir, that I may spare you the trouble of offering any future arguments in his favour, let me tell you, that I have weighed every-thing thoroughly: All that human vanity could suggest; All that a desirable reconciliation with my friends, and the kind respects of his own, could bid me hope for: The enjoyment of Miss Howe's friendship, the dearest consideration to me now, of all worldly ones: All these I have weighed: And the result is, and *was* before you favoured me with these communications, that I have more satisfaction in the hope, that, in one month, there will be an end of All with me, than in the most agreeable things that could happen from an alliance with Mr. Lovelace, altho' I were to be assured he would make the best and tenderest of husbands. But as to the rest; If, satisfied with the evils he has brought upon me, he will forbear all further persecutions of me, I will, to my last hour, wish him good: Altho' he hath overwhelped the fatherless, and digged a pit for his friend: Fatherless may *she* well be called, and motherless too, who has been denied all paternal protection, and motherly forgiveness.

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AND now, Sir, acknowledging gratefully your favour in the Extracts, I come to the second part of my request: Which requires a great deal of courage to mention to you: And which courage nothing but a great deal of distress, and a very destitute condition, can give. But, if improper, I can but be denied; and dare to say, I shall be at least excused. Thus, then, I preface it:

You see, Sir, that I am thrown absolutely into the hands of strangers, who, altho' as kind and compassionate as strangers can be wished to be, are nevertheless persons from whom I cannot expect any-thing more than pity and good wishes; nor can my memory receive from them any more protection than my person, if either should need it.

If then I request it, of the *only* gentleman possessed of materials that will enable him, to do my character justice;

And who has courage, independence, and ability to oblige me;

To be the protector of my memory, as I may say;

And to be my *Executor*; and to see some of my dying requests performed;

(And if I leave it to him to do the whole in his own way, manner, and time; consulting, however, in requisite cases, my dear Miss Howe);

I presume to hope, that this part of my request may be granted.

And if it may, These satisfactions will accrue to me from the favour done me, and the office undertaken:

It will be an honour to my memory, with all those who shall know, that I was so well satisfied of my innocence, that, having not time to write my own story, I could intrust it to the relation which the destroyer of my fame and fortunes has given of it.

I shall not be apprehensive of involving any one in troubles or hazards by this task, either with my own relations, or with your friend; having dispositions to make, which perhaps my own friends will not be so well pleased with as it were to be wished they would be; for I intend not unreasonable ones: But you know, Sir, where *Self* is judge, matters, even with *good people*, will not always be rightly judged of.

I shall also be freed from the pain of recollecting things, that my soul is vexed at; and this at a time when its tumults should be allay'd, in order to make way for the most important preparation.

And who knows, but that the man, who already, from a principle of humanity, is touched at my misfortunes, when he comes to revolve the whole story, placed before him

him in one strong light, and when he shall have the catastrophe likewise before him; and shall become in a manner, interested in it: Who knows, but that, from a still higher principle, he may so regulate his future actions, as to find his own reward, in the everlasting welfare which is wished him by his

*Obliged Servant,*

CLARISSA HARLOWE?

## LETTER XCVII.

*Mr. BELFORD, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.*

*Madam,*

*Friday, Aug. 4.*

I AM so sensible of the honour done me in yours of this day, that I would not delay for one moment the answering of it. I hope you will live to see many happy years; and to be your own Executrix in those points which your heart is most set upon. But, in case of survivorship, I most chearfully accept of the sacred office you are pleased to offer me; and you may absolutely rely upon my fidelity, and, if possible, upon the literal performance of every article you shall injoin me.

The effect of the kind wish you conclude with has been my concern ever since I have been admitted to the honour of your conversation. It shall be my whole endeavour that it be not vain. The happiness of approaching you, which this trust, as I presume, will give me frequent opportunities of doing, must necessarily promote the desirable end; since it will be impossible to be a witness of your piety, equanimity, and other virtues, and not aspire to emulate you. All I beg is, That you will not suffer any future candidate, or event, to displace me; unless some new instances of unworthiness appear, either in the morals or behaviour of,

*Madam,*

*Your most obliged and faithful Servant,*

J. BELFORD.

LET.

LETTER XCVIII.

Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

Friday night, Aug. 4.

I Have actually delivered to the lady the extracts she requested me to give her from thy letters. I do assure thee, that I have made the very best of the matter for thee, *not* that conscience, but that friendship, could oblige me to make. I have changed or omitted some free words. The warm description of her person in the *fire-scene*, as I may call it, I have omitted. I have told her, that I have done justice to you, in the justice you have done to her unexampled virtue. But take the very words which I wrote to her immediately following the extracts:

‘ And now, Madam,—See the paragraph marked with inverted commas [ ‘ thus ] p. 330.

The lady is extremely uneasy at the thoughts of your attempting to visit her. For Heaven’s sake (your word being given), and for Pity’s sake (for she is really in a very weak and languishing way), let me beg of you not to think of it.

Yesterday afternoon she received a cruel letter, as Mrs. Lovick supposes it to be, by the effect it had upon her, from her sister, in answer to one written last Saturday, intreating a blessing and forgiveness from her parents.

She acknowledges, that, if all thy letters are written with equal decency and justice, as I have assured her they are, she shall think herself freed from the necessity of writing her own story: And this is an advantage to thee accruing from the extracts I have obliged her with; tho’ thou, perhaps, wilt not thank me for so doing.

But what thinkest thou is the second request she had to make to me? No other than that I would be her *Executor!* — Her motives will appear before thee in proper time; and then, I dare answer for them, will be satisfactory.

You cannot imagine how proud I am of this trust. I am afraid I shall too soon come into the execution of it. As she is always writing, what a melancholy pleasure

will the perusal and disposition of her papers afford me! Such a sweetnes of temper, so much patience and resignation, as she seems to be mistress of; yet writing of and in the midst of *present* distresses! How much more lively and affecting, for that reason, must her stile be, than all that can be read in the dry, narrative, unanimated stile of persons relating difficulties and dangers surmounted! The minds of such not labouring in suspense, not tortured by the pangs of uncertainty, about events still hidden in the womb of fate; but, on the contrary, perfectly at ease; the relater unmoved by his own story, how then able to move the hearer or reader?

*Saturday morning, Aug. 5.*

I AM just returned from visiting the lady, and thanking her in person for the honour she has done me; and assuring her, if called to the sacred trust, of the utmost fidelity and exactness. I found her very ill. I took notice of it. She said, She had received a second hard-hearted letter from her sister; and she had been writing a letter (and that on her knees) directly to her mother; which before she had not the courage to do. It was for a last blessing, and forgiveness. No wonder, she said, that I saw her affected. Now that I had accepted of the last charitable office for her (for which, as well as for complying with her other request, she thanked me) I should one day have all these letters before me: And could she have a kind one, in return to that she had been now writing, to counterbalance the unkind one she had from her sister, she might be induced to shew me both together.

I knew she would be displeased, if I had censured the cruelty of her relations; I therefore only said, That surely she must have enemies, who hoped to find their account in keeping up the resentments of her friends against her.

It may be so, Mr. Belford, said she: The unhappy never want enemies. One fault, wilfully committed, authorizes the imputation of many more. Where the ear is opened to accusations, accusers will not be wanting; and every-one will officiously come with stories against a disgraced child, where nothing dare be said in her favour. I should have been wile in time, and not have needed to be convinced, by my own misfortunes, of the

truth

truth of what common experience daily demonstrates. Mr. Lovelace's baseness, my father's inflexibility, my sister's reproaches, are the natural consequences of my own rashness; so I must make the best of my hard lot. Only, as these consequences follow one another so closely, while they are *new*, how can I help being anew affected?

I asked, If a letter written by myself, by her doctor or apothecary, to any of her friends, representing her low state of health, and great humility, would be acceptable? Or if a journey to any of them would be of service, I would gladly undertake it in person, and strictly conform to her orders, to whomsoever she would direct me to apply.

She earnestly desired, that nothing of this sort might be attempted, especially without her knowledge and consent. Miss Howe, she said, ~~had~~ done harm by her kindly-intended zeal; and if there were room to expect favour by mediation, she had ready at hand a kind friend, Mrs. Norton, who for piety and prudence had few equals; and who would let slip no opportunity to do her service.

I let her know, that I was going out of town till Monday: She wish'd me pleasure; and said, she should be glad to see me on my return.

*Adieu!*

## LETTER XCIX.

*Miss AR. HARLOWE, To Miss CL. HARLOWE.*

[*In Answer to hers of Saturday, July 29. p. 316.]*

*Sister CLARY,*

*Thursday morn. Aug. 3.*

I Wish you would not trouble me with any more of your letters. You had always a knack at writing; and depended upon making every one do what you would, when you wrote. But your wit and your folly have undone you. And now, as all naughty creatures do, when they can't help themselves, you come begging and praying, and make others as uneasy as yourself.

When I wrote last to you, I *expected* that I should not be at rest.

And so you'd creep on, by little and little, till you'll want to be received again.

But you only hope for *forgiveness*, and a *blessing*, you fay.

say. A blessing for what, sister Clary? Think for what? —However, I read your letter to my father and mother.

I won't tell you what my papa said—One who has the true sense you boast to have of your misdeeds, may guess, without my telling you, what a justly incensed father would say on such an occasion.

My poor mamma—O wretch! What has not your ingrateful folly cost my poor mamma!—Had you been less a darling, you would not, perhaps, have been so graceless: But I never in my life saw a cocker'd favourite come to good.

My heart is full, and I can't help writing my mind; for your crimes have disgraced us all; and I am afraid, and ashamed, to go to any public or private assemblée or diversion: And why? — I need not say why, when your actions are the subjects, either of the open talk, or of the affronting whispers, of both sexes, at all such places.

Upon the whole, I am sorry I have no more comfort to send you: But I find no-body willing to forgive you. I don't know what time may do for you; and when it is seen, that your penitence is not owing more to disappointment than true conviction: For it is too probable, Miss Clary, that, had you gone on as swimmingly as you expected, and had not your feather-headed villain abandoned you, we should have heard nothing of these moving supplications: Nor of any-thing, but defiance from him, and a guilt gloried in from you. And this is every-one's opinion, as well as that of

Your grieved Sister,

ARABELLA HARLOWE.

I send this by a particular hand, who undertakes to give it you, or leave it for you, by to-morrow night.

### LETTER C.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To her Mother.*

Honoured Madam,

Sat. Aug. 5.

NO self-convicted criminal ever approached her angry and just judge with greater awe, nor with a truer contrition, than I do you by these lines.

Indeed I must say, that if the matter of my humble prayer

prayer had not respected my future welfare, I had not dared to take this liberty. But my heart is set upon it, as upon a thing next to God Almighty's forgiveness necessary for me.

Had my happy sister known my distresses, she would not have wrung my heart, as she has done, by a severity, which I must needs think unkind and unsisterly.

But complaint of any unkindness from her belongs not to me : Yet, as she is pleased to write, that it must be seen that my penitence is less owing to disappointment, than to true conviction, permit me, Madam, to insist upon it, that I am actually *intitled* to the blessing I sue for ; since my humble prayer is founded upon a true and unfeigned repentance : And this you will the readier believe, if the creature, who never, to the best of her remembrance, told her mamma a wilful falsehood, may be credited, when she declares, as she does, in the most solemn manner, that she met the seducer, with a determination not to go off with him : That the rash step was owing more to compulsion than infatuation : And that her heart was so little in it, that she repented and grieved from the moment she found herself in his power ; and for every moment after, for several weeks before ~~she had~~ any cause from him to apprehend the usage she met with.

Wherefore, on my knees, my ever-honoured mamma, (for on my knees I write this letter) I do most humbly beg your Blessing : Say but, in so many words (I ask you not to call me your daughter)—*Loft, unhappy wretch, I forgive you ! and may God bless you !*—This is all ! Let me, on a blessed scrap of paper, but see one sentence to this effect, under your dear hand, that I may hold it to my heart in my most trying struggles, and I shall think it a passport to Heaven. And, if I do not too much presume, and it were *We* instead of *I*, and *both* your honoured names subjoined to it, I should then have nothing more to wish. Then would I say, “ Great and merciful God ! “ thou seest here in this paper thy poor unworthy creature “ absolved by her justly-offended parents : O join, for my “ Redeemer’s sake, thy all-gracious *Fiat*, and receive a “ repentant sinner to the arms of thy mercy ! ”

I can conjure you, Madam, by no subject of motherly

tenderness, that will not, in the opinion of my severe censurers, before whom this humble address must appear, add to my reproach; Let me therefore, for God's sake, prevail upon you to pronounce me blest and forgiven, since you will thereby sprinkle comfort thro' the last hours of

*Your*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

### LETTER CI.

*Miss MONTAGUE, To Miss CL. HARLOWE.*

[*In Answer to hers of Thursday, Aug. 3. See p. 326.]*

*Dear Madam,*

*Monday, Aug. 7.*

**W**E were all of opinion, *before* your letter came, that Mr. Lovelace was utterly unworthy of you, and deserved condign punishment rather than the blessing of such a wife: And hoped far *more* from your kind consideration for *us*, than any we supposed you could have for so base an *injurer*. For we were all determined to love you, and admire you, let *his* behaviour to you be what it would.

But, after your letter, what can be said?

I am, however, commanded to write in all the subscribing names, to let you know, how greatly your sufferings have affected us: To tell you, that my Lord M. has forbid him ever more to darken the doors of the apartments where he shall be: And as you labour under the unhappy effects of your friends displeasure, which may subject you to inconveniencies, his Lordship, and Lady Sarah, and Lady Betty, beg of you to accept, for your life, or, at least, till you are admitted to enjoy your own estate, of one hundred guineas *per quarter*, which will be regularly brought you by an especial hand, and of the inclosed Bank bill for a beginning. And do not, dearest Madam, we all beseech you, do not think you are beholden for this token of Lord M.'s and Lady Sarah's and Lady Betty's love to you, to the *friends of this vile man*; for he has not one friend left among us.

We each of us desire to be favoured with a place in your esteem; and to be considered upon the same foot of relationship, as if what once was so much our pleasure to

hope

hope would be, bad been. And it shall be our united prayer, that you may recover health and spirits, and live to see many happy years: And, since this wretch can no more be pleaded for, that, when he is gone abroad, as he now is preparing to do, we may be permitted the honour of a personal acquaintance with a lady who has no equal. These are the earnest requests, dearest young Lady, of

*Your affectionate Friends,  
and most faithful Servants,*

M.

SARAH SADLEIR.

ELIZ. LAWRENCE.

CHARL. MONTAGUE.

MARTH. MONTAGUE.

You will break the hearts of the three first-named more particularly, if you refuse them your acceptance. Dearest Miss Harlowe, punish not *them* for his crimes. We send by a particular hand, which will bring us, we hope, your accepting favour.

Mr. Lovelace writes by the same hand; but he knows nothing of ours, nor we of his: For we shun each other; and one part of the house holds *us*, another *him*, the remotest from each other.

## LETTER CII.

*Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;*

*Sat. Aug. 5.*

I Am so excessively disturbed at the contents of Miss Harlowe's answer to my cousin Charlotte's letter of Tuesday last (which was given her by the same fellow that gave me yours), that I have hardly patience or consideration enough to weigh what you write.

She had need, indeed, to cry out for mercy herself from her friends, who knows not how to shew any! She is a true daughter of the Harlowes—By my soul, Jack, she is a true daughter of the Harlowes! Yet has she so many excellencies, that I must love her; and, fool that I am, love her the more for her despising me.

Thou runnest on with thy cursed nonsensical reformatio-

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rote,

rote, of dying, dying, dying ! and, having once got the word by the end, canst not help foisting it in at every period ! The devil take me, if I don't think thou wouldest give her poison with thy own hands, rather than she should recover, and rob thee of the merit of being a conjurer !

But no more of thy cursed knell ; thy changes upon death's candlestick turned bottom-upwards : She'll live to bury me ; I see that : For, by my soul, I can neither eat, drink, nor sleep ; nor, what's still worse, love any woman in the world but her. Nor care I to look upon a woman now ; on the contrary, I turn my head from every one I meet ; except by chance an eye, an air, a feature, strikes me resembling hers in some glancing-by face ; and then I cannot forbear looking again ; tho' the second look recovers me ; for there can be no-body like her.

But surely, Belford, the devil's in this lady ! The more I think of her nonsense and obstinacy, the less patience I have with her. Is it possible she can do herself, her family, her friends, so much justice any other way, as by marrying me ? Were she sure she should live but a day, she ought to die a wife. If her *Christian revenge* will not let her wish to do so for her *own sake*, ought she not for the sake of her family, and of her Sex, which she pretends sometimes to have so much concern for ? And if no *sake* is dear enough to move her Harlowe-spirit in my favour, has she any title to the pity thou so pitifully art always be-speaking for her ?

As to the difference which her letter has made between me and the stupid family here (and I must tell thee we are all broke in pieces) I value not that of a button. They are fools to anathematize and curse me, who can give them ten curses for one, were they to hold it for a day together.

I have one half of the house to myself ; and that the best ; for the Great enjoy that least, which costs them most : *Grandeur* and *Use* are two things : The common part is theirs ; the state part is mine : And here I lord it, and *will* lord it, as long as I please ; while the two pursy sisters, the old gouty brother, and the two musty nieces, are stived up in the other half, and dare not stir for fear of meeting me : Whom (that's the jest of it) they have forbidden coming into their apartments, as I have them into mine. And so I have

I have them all prisoners, while I range about as I please. Pretty dogs and doggesses, to quarrel and bark at me; and yet, whenever I appear, afraid to pop out of their kennels; or if out before they see me, at the sight of me run growling in again, with their flapt ears, their sweeping dewlaps, and their quivering tails curling inwards.

And here, while I am thus worthily waging war with beetles, drones, wasps, and hornets, and am all on fire with the rage of slighted love, thou art regaling thyself with phlegm and rock-water, and art going on with thy reformation-scheme, and thy exultations in my misfortunes!

The devil take thee for an insensible dough-bak'd varlet: I have no more patience with thee, than with the lady; for thou knowest nothing either of love or friendship, but art as incapable of the one, as unworthy of the other; else wouldst thou not rejoice, as thou doest under the *grimace of pity*, in my disappointments.

And thou art a pretty fellow, art thou not? to engage to transcribe for her some parts of my letters written to thee in confidence? Letters that thou shouldest sooner have parted with thy cursed tongue, than have owned thou ever hadst received such: Yet these are now to be communicated to *her*! But I charge thee, and woe be to thee if it be too late! that thou do not oblige her with a line of mine.

If thou *bast* done it, the least vengeance I will take, is to break thro' *my* honour given to thee not to visit her, as thou wilt have broken thro' *thine* to me, in communicating letters written under the seal of friendship.

I am now convinced, too sadly for my hopes, by her letter to my cousin Charlotte, that she is determined never to have me.

*Unprecedented wickedness*, she calls mine to her. But how does *she* know what the ardor of flaming love will stimulate? How does *she* know the requisite distinctions of the words she uses in this case?—To think the *worst*, and to be able to *make comparisons* in these *very* delicate situations, must she not be less delicate than I had imagined her to be?—But she has heard, that the devil is black; and having a mind to make one of me, brays together, in the mortar of her wild fancy, twenty chimney-sweepers, in order to make one footier than ordinary rise out of the dirty mass.

But what a whirlwind does she raise in my soul, by her proud contempts of me ! Never, never, was mortal man's pride so mortified. How does she sink me, even in my own eyes ! — Her heart sincerely repulses me, she says, for my MEANNESS — Yet she intends to reap the benefit of what she calls so ! — Curse upon her haughtiness, and her meanness, at the same time ! — Her haughtiness to me, and her meanness to her own relations; more unworthy of mankind with her, than I can be, or I am mean indeed.

Yet who but must admire, who but must adore her ? — O that cursed, cursed house ! But for the women of that ! — Then their damn'd potions ! But for those, had her unimpaired intellects, and the majesty of her virtue, saved her, as once it did by her humble eloquence (*a*), another time by her terrifying menaces against her own life (*b*).

Yet in both these to find her power over me, and my love for her, and to hate, to despise, and to refuse me ! — She might have done this with some shew of justice, had the last-intended violation been perpetrated : — But to go away conqueror and triumphant in every light ! — Well may she despise me for suffering her to do so.

She left me low and mean indeed ! — And the impression holds with her. — I could tear my flesh, that I gave her not cause — that I humbled her not *indeed* — or that I staid not in town till I could have exalted myself, by giving myself a wife superior to all trial, to all temptation.

I will venture one more letter to her, however ; and if that don't do, or procure me an answer, then will I endeavour to see her, let what *will* be the consequence. If she get out of my way, I will do some noble mischief to the vixen girl whom she most loves, and then quit the kingdom for ever.

And now, Jack, since thy hand is in at communicating the contents of private letters, tell her this, if thou wilt. And add to it, That if SHE abandon me, G O D will ; and it is no matter then what becomes of

*Her LOVELACE !*

(*a*) In the fire-scene, Vol. iv. p. 296.

(*b*) Vol. v. Letter L.

## LETTER CIII.

*Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;*

[In Answer to his of Friday night, Aug. 4. p. 335.]

Monday, Aug. 7.

AND so you have actually delivered to the fair Implacable extracts of letters written in the confidence of friendship! Take care—Take care, Belford—I do indeed love you better than I love any man in the world: But this is a very delicate point. The matter is grown very serious to me. My heart is bent upon having her. And have her I will, tho' I marry her in the agonies of death.

She is very earnest, you say, that I will not offer to molest her. *That*, let me tell her, will absolutely depend upon herself, and the answer she returns, whether by pen and ink, or the contemptuous one of silence, which she bestowed upon my last four to her: And I will write it in such humble, and in such reasonable terms, that, if she is not a true Harlowe, she *shall* forgive me. But as to the *executorship* she is for conferring upon thee—Thou *shalt* not be her *executor*: Let me perish if thou *shalt*.—Nor shall she die. No-body shall be any-thing, no-body shall dare to be any-thing, to her, but me—Thy happiness is already too great, to be admitted daily to her presence; to look upon her, to talk to her, to hear her talk, while I am forbid to come within view of her window.—What a reprobation is this, of the man who was once more dear to her than all the men in the world!—And now to be able to look down upon me, while her exalted head is hid from me among the stars, sometimes with low scorn, at other times with abject pity, I cannot bear it.

This I tell thee, that if I have not success in my effort by letter, I will overcome the creeping folly that has found its way to my heart, or I will tear it out in her presence, and throw it at hers, that she may see how much more tender than her own that organ is, which she, and you, and every-one else, have taken the liberty to call callous.

Give notice to the people who live back and edge, and on either hand, of the cursed mother, to remove their best effects, if I am rejected: For the first vengeance I

shall take, will be to set fire to that den of serpents. Nor will there be any fear of taking them when they are in any act that has *the relish of salvation in it*, as Shakespeare says — So that my revenge, if they perish in the flames I shall light up, will be complete, as to them.

## LETTER CIV.

*Mr. LOVELACE, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.*

Monday, Aug. 7.

**L**ittle as I have reason to expect either your patient ear, or forgiving heart, yet cannot I forbear to write to you once more (as a more pardonable intrusion, perhaps, than a visit would be), to beg of you to put it in my power to atone, as far as it is possible to atone, for the injuries I have done you.

Your angelic purity, and my awaken'd conscience, are standing records of your exalted merit, and of my detestable baseness : But your forgiveness will lay me under an eternal obligation to you—Forgive me then, my dearest life, my earthly good, the visible anchor of my future hope ! As you (who believe you have something to be forgiven for) hope for pardon yourself, forgive me, and consent to meet me, upon your own conditions, and in whose company you please, at the holy altar, and to give yourself a title to the most repentant and affectionate heart, that ever beat in a human bosom.

But, perhaps, a time of probation may be required. It may be impossible for you, as well from indisposition as doubt, so soon to receive me to absolute favour as my heart wishes to be received. In this case, I will submit to your pleasure ; and there shall be no penance which you can impose, that I will not cheerfully undergo, if you will be pleased to give me hope, that, after an expiation, suppose of months, wherein the regularity of my future life and actions shall convince you of my reformation, you will at last be mine.

Let me beg the favour then of a few lines, encouraging me in this *conditional* hope, if it must not be a still *nearer* hope, and a more generous encouragement.

If you refuse me This, you will make me desirer.

But even then I must, at all events, throw myself at your feet, that I may not charge myself with the omission of any earnest, any humble effort, to move you in my favour: For in You, Madam, in *your forgiveness*, are centred my hopes as to *both worlds*: Since to be reprobated finally by *You*, will leave me without expectation of mercy from *Above*!—For I am now awaken'd enough to think, that to be forgiven by injured innocents is *necessary* to the Divine pardon; the Almighty putting into the power of such, (as is reasonable to believe) the wretch who causelessly and capitally offends them. And *who* can be intitled to this power, if *You* are not?

Your cause, Madam, in a word, I look upon to be the *cause of virtue*, and, as such, the *cause of God*. And may I not expect, that He will assert it in the perdition of a man, who has acted by a person of the most spotless purity, as I have done, if *you*, by rejecting me, shew that I have offended beyond the possibility of *forgiveness*?

I do most solemnly assure you, that no temporal or worldly views induce me to this earnest address. I deserve not *forgiveness* from *you*. Nor do my Lord M. and his sisters from *me*. I despise them from my heart, for presuming to imagine, that I will be controuled by the prospect of any benefits in their power to confer. There is not a person breathing, but *yourself*, who shall prescribe to me. Your whole conduct, Madam, has been so nobly principled, and your resentments are so admirably just, that you appear to me even in a divine light; and in an infinitely more amiable one at the same time, than you could have appeared in, had you not suffered the barbarous wrongs, that now fill my mind with anguish and horror at my own recollect~~ed~~ villainy to the most excellent of women.

I repeat, that all I beg for the present, is a few lines, to guide my doubtful steps; and (if possible for you so far to condescend) to encourage me to hope, that, if I can justify my present vows by my future conduct, I may be permitted the honour to style myself

*Eternally Yours,*  
R. LOVELACE.

L E T-

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Lord M. and to  
the Ladies of his House.*

[*In Reply to Miss Montague's of Monday, Aug. 7. p. 340.]*

Tuesday, Aug. 8.

**E**Xcuse me, my good Lord, and my ever-honoured Ladies, from accepting of your noble quarterly bounty; and allow me to return, with all grateful acknowledgement, and true humility, the inclosed earnest of your goodness to me. Indeed I have no need of the one, and cannot possibly want the other: But, nevertheless, have such a sense of your generous favour, that, to my last hour, I shall have pleasure in contemplating upon it, and be proud of the place I hold in the esteem of such venerable personages, to whom I once had the ambition to hope to be related.

But give me leave to express my concern, that you have banished your kinsman from your presence and favour: Since now, perhaps, he will be under less restraint than ever; and since I in particular, who had hoped by your influences to remain unmolested for the remainder of my days, may be again subjected to his persecutions.

He has not, my good Lord, and my dear Ladies, offended against *you*, as he has against *me*; and yet you could all very generously intercede for him with *me*: And shall I be *very* improper, if I desire, for my own peace-sake; for the sake of other poor creatures, who may be still injured by him, if he be made quite desperate; and for the sake of all your worthy family; that you will extend to *him* that forgiveness which you hoped for from *me*? and this the rather, as I presume to think, that his daring and impetuous spirit will not be subdued by violent methods; since I have no doubt, that the gratifying of a present passion will be always more prevalent with him, than any future prospects, however unwarrantable the one, or beneficial the other.

Your resentments on my account are extremely generous, as your goodness to me is truly noble: But I am not without hope, that he will be properly affected by the evils he has made me suffer; and that, when I am laid low and forgotten, your whole honourable family will be enabled

to

to rejoice in his reformation ; and see many of those happy years together, which, my good Lord, and my dear Ladies, you so kindly wish to

*Your ever-grateful and obliged*

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

## LETTER CVI.

Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

*Thursday night, Aug. 10.*

YOU have been informed by Tourville, how much Belton's illness and affairs have engaged me, as well as Mowbray and him, since my former. I called at Smith's on Monday, in my way to Epsom.

The lady was gone to chapel : But I had the satisfaction to hear she was not worse ; and left my compliments, and an intimation that I should be out of town for three or four days.

I refer myself to Tourville, who will let you know the difficulty we had to drive out this *meek* mistress, and *frugal* manager, with her cubs, and to give the poor fellow's sister possession for him of his own house ; he skulking mean while at an inn at Croydon, too dispirited to appear in his own cause.

But I must observe, that we were probably but just in time to save the shatter'd remains of his fortune from this rapacious woman, and her accomplices : For, as he cannot live long, and she thinks so, we found she had certainly taken measures to set up a marriage, and keep possession of all for herself and her sons.

Tourville will tell you how I was forced to chastise the quondam hostler in her sight, before I could drive him out of the house. He had the insolence to lay hands on me : And I made him take but one step from the top to the bottom of a pair of stairs. I thought his neck and all his bones had been broken. And then, he being carried out neck-and-heels, Thomasine thought fit to walk out after him.

Charming consequences of *keeping* ; the state we have been so fond of extolling !—Whatever it may be in strong health, *sickness* and *declining spirits* in the keeper, will let him see the difference. She

She should soon have him, she told a confident, in the space of six foot by five; meaning his bed: And then she would let no-body come near him but whom she pleased. The hostler-fellow, I suppose, would then have been his physician; his will ready made for him; — and widows-weeds, probably, ready provided; who knows, but to appear in them in his own sight; as once I knew an instance in a wicked wife, insulting a husband she hated, when she thought him past recovery: Tho' it gave the man such spirits, and such a turn, that he got over it, and lived to see her in her coffin, dress'd out in the very weeds she had insulted him in.

So much, for the present, for Belton, and his Thomasine.

❧❧❧

I BEGIN to pity thee heartily, now I see thee in earnest, in the fruitless love thou expressest to this angel of a lady; and the rather, as, say what thou wilt, it is impossible she should get over her illnes, and her friends implacableness, of which she has had fresh instances.

I hope thou art not indeed displeased with the extracts I have made from thy letters for her. The letting her know the justice thou hast done to her virtue in them, is so much in favour of thy ingenuity, that I think in my heart I was right; tho' to any other woman, and to one who had not known the worst of thee that she could know, it might have been wrong.

If the end will justify the means, it is plain, that I have done well with regard to you both; since I have made *her* easier, and *you* appear in a better light to her, than otherwise you would have done.

But if, nevertheless, you are dissatisfied with my having obliged her in a point, which I acknowlege to be delicate, let us canvas this matter at our first meeting: And then I will shew you what the extracts were, and what connexions I gave them in your favour.

But surely thou dost not pretend to say what I shall, or shall not do, as to the executorship.

I am my own man, I hope. I think thou shouldest be glad to have the justification of her memory left to one, who, at the same time, thou mayst be assured, will treat thee, and thy actions, with all the lenity the case will admit.

I cannot help expressing my surprize at one instance of thy self-partiality ; and that is, where thou sayst, She had need, indeed, to cry out for mercy herself from her friends, who knows not how to shew any !

Surely thou canst not think the cases alike !—For she, as I understand, desires but a last blessing, and a last forgiveness, for a fault in a manner *involuntary*, if a fault at all ; and *hopes* not to be *received* : Thou, to be forgiven *premeditated* wrongs (which, nevertheless, she forgives, on condition to be no more molested by thee) ; and *hopest* to be *received into favour*, and to make the finest jewel in the world thy absolute property, in consequence of that forgiveness.

I will now briefly proceed to relate what has passed since my last, as to the poor lady ; by which thou wilt see, she has troubles enough upon her, all springing originally from thee, without thy needing to add more to them by new vexations. And as long as thou canst exert thyself so very cavalierly at M. Hall, where every-one is thy prisoner, I see not but the bravery of thy spirit may be as well gratified in domineering there over half a dozen persons of rank and distinction, as it could be over a helpless orphan, as I may call this lady, since she has not a single friend to stand by her, if I do not ; and who will think herself happy, if she can refuge herself from thee, and from all the world, in the arms of death.

My last was dated on Saturday.

On Sunday, in compliance with her doctor's advice, she took a little airing. Mrs. Lovick, and Mr. Smith and his wife, were with her. After being at Highgate chapel at divine service, she treated them with a little repast ; and in the afternoon was at Islington church, in her way home ; returning tolerably cheerful.

She had received several letters in my absence, as Mrs. Lovick acquainted me, besides yours. Yours, it seems, much distressed her ; but she ordered the messenger, who pressed for an answer, to be told, that it did not require an immediate one.

On Wednesday she received a letter from her uncle Harlowe (*a*), in answer to one she had written to her mother

(a) See Letter cix. p. 357.

mother on Saturday on her knees. It must be a very cruel one, Mrs. Lovick says, by the effects it had upon her: For, when she received it, she was intending to take an afternoon airing in a coach; but was thrown into so violent a fit of hysterics upon it, that she was forced to lie down; and (being not recovered thereby) to go to bed about eight o'clock.

On Thursday morning she was up very early; and had recourse to the Scriptures to calm her mind, as she told Mrs. Lovick: And, weak as she was, would go in a chair to Lincoln's-inn chapel, about eleven. She was brought home a little better; and then sat down to write to her uncle. But was obliged to leave off several times—To struggle, as she told Mrs. Lovick, for an humble temper.  
 ‘ My heart, said she to the good woman, is a proud heart,  
 ‘ and not yet, I find, enough mortified to my condition;  
 ‘ but, do what I can, will be for prescribing resenting  
 ‘ things to my pen.’

I arrived in town from Belton's this Thursday evening; and went directly to Smith's. She was too ill to receive my visit. But on sending up my compliments, she sent me down word, that she should be glad to see me in the morning.

Mrs. Lovick obliged me with the copy of a meditation collected by the lady from the Scriptures. She has intitled it, *Poor mortals the cause of their own misery*; so intitled, I presume, with intention to take off the edge of her repinings at hardships so disproportioned to her fault, were her fault even as great as she is inclined to think it. We may see by this, the method she takes to fortify her mind, and to which she owes, in a great measure, the magnanimity with which she bears her undeserved persecutions.

### M E D I T A T I O N.

*Poor mortals the cause of their own misery.*

*SAY not thou, It is thro' the Lord that I fell away; for thou oughtest not to do the thing that he hateth.*  
*Say not thou, He hath caused me to err; for he hath no need of the sinful man.*

*He himself made man from the beginning, and left him in the hand of his own counsel;*

If thou wilt, to keep the commandments, and to perform acceptable faithfulness.

He hath set fire and water before thee: Stretch forth thine hand to whether thou wilt.

He hath commanded no man to do wickedly; neither hath he given any man licence to sin.

And now, Lord, what is my hope? Truly my hope is only in thee.

Deliver me from all my offences; and make me not a re-buke unto the foolish.

When thou with rebuke dost chasten man for sin, thou makest his beauty to consume away, like as it were a moth fretting a garment: Every man therefore is vanity.

Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I am desolate and afflicted.

The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my distresses!



Mrs. Smith gave me the following particulars of a conversation that passed between herself and a young clergyman, on Tuesday afternoon, who, as it appears, was employed to make inquiries about the lady by her friends.

He came into the shop in a riding-habit, and asked for some Spanish snuff; and finding only herself there, he desired to have a little talk with her in the back-shop.

He beat about the bush in several distant questions, and at last began to talk more directly about Miss Harlowe.

He said, He knew her before her fall (That was his impudent word); and gave the substance of the following account of her, as I collected it from Mrs. Smith.

' She was then, he said, the admiration and delight of every-body: He lamented, with great solemnity, her backsliding; another of his phrases. Mrs. Smith said, ' He was a fine scholar; for he spoke several things she understood not; and either in Latin or Greek, she could not tell which; but was so good as to give her the English of them without asking. A fine thing, she said, for a scholar to be so condescending !

He said, ' Her going off with so vile a rake had given great scandal and offence to all the neighbouring ladies, as well as to her friends.'

He told Mrs. Smith ‘ how much she used to be followed by every-one’s eye, whenever she went abroad, or to church, and praised and blessed by every tongue, as she passed ; especially by the poor : That she gave the fashion to the fashionable, without seeming herself to intend it, or to know she did : That, however, it was pleasant to see ladies imitate her in dress and behaviour, who, being unable to come up to her in grace and ease, exposed but their own affectation and awkwardness, at the time that they thought themselves secure of a general approbation, because they wore the same things, and put them on in the same manner, that *she* did, who had every-body’s admiration ; little considering, that were *her* person like *theirs*, or if she had had *their* defects, she would have brought up a very different fashion ; for that *nature* was her guide in every-thing, and *ease* her study ; which, joined with a mingled dignity and condescension in her air and manner, whether she received or paid a compliment, distinguished her above all her Sex.

‘ He spoke not, he said, his own sentiments only on this occasion, but those of every-body : For that the praises of Miss Clarissa Harlowe were such a favourite topic, that a person who could not speak well upon any other subject, was sure to speak well upon That ; because he could say nothing but what he had heard repeated and applauded twenty times over.

Hence it was, perhaps, that this gentleman accounted for the best things that he said himself ; tho’ I must own that the personal knowledge of the lady which I am favoured with, made it easy to me to lick into shape what the good woman reported to me, as the character given her by the young Levite : For who, even now, in her decline of health, sees not that all these attributes belong to her ?

I suppose he has not been long come from college, and now thinks he has nothing to do, but to blaze away for a scholar among the *ignorant* ; as such young fellows are apt to think those who cannot cap verses with them, and tell us how an antient author expressed himself in Latin on a point which, however, they may know how, as well as that author, to express in English.

Mrs. Smith was so taken with him, that she would fain  
have

have introduced him to the lady, not questioning but it would be very acceptable to her, to see one who knew her and her friends so well. But this he declined for several reasons, which he gave. One was, that persons of his cloth should be very cautious of the company they were in, especially where *Sex* was concerned, and where a lady had *flurred her reputation*—[I wish I had been there, when he gave himself these airs] Another, that he was desired to inform himself of her present way of life, and who her visitors were; for, as to the praises Mrs. Smith gave the lady, he hinted, that *she* seemed to be a good-natured woman, and might (tho' for the lady's sake he hoped not) be too partial and short-sighted to be trusted to, absolutely, in a concern of so high a nature as he intimated the task was which he had undertaken; nodding out words of doubtful import, and assuming airs of great significance, (as I could gather) throughout the whole conversation. And when Mrs. Smith told him, that the lady was in a very bad state of health, he gave a careless shrug—She may be very ill, says he: Her disappointments must have touch'd her to the quick: But she is not bad enough, I dare say, yet, to atone for her very great lapse, and to expect to be forgiven by those whom she has so much disgraced.

A starch'd conceited novice! What would I give he had fallen in my way?

He went away highly satisfied with himself, no doubt, and assured of Mrs. Smith's great opinion of his sagacity and learning: But bid her not say any-thing to the lady about him, or his inquiries. And I, for very different reasons, enjoined the same thing.

I am glad, however, for her peace of mind's sake, that they begin to think it behoves them to inquire about her.

## LETTER CVII.

*Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;*

*Friday, Aug. 11.*

*M*R. Belford acquaints his friend with the generosity of Lord M. and the Ladies of his family; and with the lady's grateful sentiments upon the occasion.

He says, that in hopes to avoid the pain of seeing him, she intends to answer his letter of the 7th, tho' much against her inclination. ' She took great notice, says Mr. Belford, of

' that

that passage in yours, which makes necessary to the  
 Divine pardon, the forgiveness of a person causelessly  
 injured.  
 Her grandfather, I find, has enabled her at eighteen  
 years of age to make her will, and to devise great  
 part of his estate to whom she pleases of the family,  
 and the rest out of it (if she die single), at her own  
 discretion; and this to create respect to her; as he ap-  
 prehended that she would be envied: And she now  
 resolves to set about making her will out of hand.'

*Mr. Belford insists upon the promise he had made him, not to molest the lady: And gives him the contents of her answer to Lord M. and the Ladies, declining their generous offers.*  
 See Letter CV. p. 348.

## LETTER CVIII.

Miss CL. HARLOWE, To ROB. LOVELACE, Esq;

Friday, Aug. 11.

TIS a cruel alternative to be either forced to see you, or to write to you. But a will of my own has been long denied me; and to avoid a greater evil, nay, now I may say, the greatest, I write.

Were I capable of disguising or concealing my real sentiments, I might safely, I dare say, give you the remote hope you request, and yet keep all my resolutions. But I must tell you, Sir; it becomes my character to tell you; that, were I to live more years than perhaps I may weeks, and there were not another man in the world, I could not, I would not, be yours.

There is no merit in performing a duty;

Religion enjoins me, not only to forgive injuries, but to return good for evil. It is all my consolation, and I bless God for giving me That, that I am now in such a state of mind, with regard to you, that I can cheerfully obey its dictates. And accordingly I tell you, that, wherever you go, I wish you happy. And in This I mean to include every good wish.

And now having, with great reluctance, I own, complied with one of your compulsory alternatives, I expect the fruits of it.

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

L E T.

LETTER CIX.

Mr. JOHN HARLOWE, To Miss CL. HARLOWE.

[In answer to hers to her Mother. See p. 338.]

Monday, Aug. 7.

Poor ungrateful, naughty Kinswoman,

YOUR mother neither caring, nor being permitted, to write, I am desired to set pen to paper, tho' I had resolved against it.

And so I am to tell you, that your letters, joined to the occasion of them, almost break the hearts of us all.

Were we sure you had seen your folly, and were truly penitent, and, at the same time, that you were so very ill as you intimate, I know not what might be done for you. But we are all acquainted with your moving ways when you want to carry a point.

Unhappy girl! how miserable have you made us all! We, who used to visit with so much pleasure, now cannot endure to look upon one another.

If you had not known, upon an hundred occasions, how dear you once was to us, you might judge of it, now, were you to know how much your folly has unhing'd us all.

Naughty, naughty girl! You see the fruits of preferring a rake and libertine to a man of sobriety and morals. Against full warning, against better knowlege. And such a modest creature too, as you was! How could you think of such an unworthy preference?

Your mother can't ask, and your sister knows not in modesty how to ask; and so I ask you, If you have any reason to think yourself with child by this villain?— You must answer this, and answer it truly, before any thing can be resolved upon about you.

You may well be touched with a deep remorse for your misdeeds. Could I ever have thought that my doating-piece, as every-one called you, would have done thus? To be sure I loved you too well. But that is over now. Yet, tho' I will not pretend to answer for any-body but myself, for my own part, I say, God forgive you! And this is all from

Your afflicted Uncle,

JOHN HARLOWE.

The

*The following MEDITATION was stich'd to the bottom  
of this Letter, with black silk.*

## M E D I T A T I O N.

*O That thou wouldest bide me in the grave! That thou  
wouldest keep me secret, till thy wrath be past!*

*My face is foul with weeping: and on my eye-lid is the  
shadow of death.*

*My friends scorn me; but mine eye poureth out tears unto  
God.*

*A dreadful sound is in my ears; in prosperity the destroyer  
came upon me!*

*I have sinned! What shall I do unto thee, O thou Pre-  
server of men! Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee;  
so that I am a burden to myself!*

*When I say, My bed shall comfort me; My couch shall ease  
my complaint;*

*Then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me thro'  
visions.*

*So that my soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than  
life.*

*I loath it! I would not live alway!—Let me alone; for  
my days are vanity!*

*He hath made me a by-word of the people; and aforetime  
I was as a tabret.*

*My days are past, my purposes are broken off, even the  
thoughts of my heart.*

*When I looked for good, then evil came unto me; and when  
I waited for light, then came darkness.*

*And where now is my hope?—*

*Yet all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my  
change come.*

## L E T T E R CX.

*Miss CL. HARLOWE, To JOHN HARLOWE, Esq;*

*Honoured Sir,*

*Thursday, Aug. 10.*

*I*T was an act of charity I begged: Only for a last bless-  
ing, that I might die in peace. I ask not to be re-  
ceived again, as my severe sister (Oh! that I had not writ-  
ten

ten to her !) is pleased to say, is my view. Let that grace be denied me when I do !

I could not look forward to my last scene with comfort, without seeking, at least, to obtain the blessing I petitioned for ; and that with a contrition so deep, that I deserved not, were it known, to be turned over from the tender nature of a mother, to the upbraiding pen of an uncle ; and to be wounded by a cruel question, put by him in a shocking manner ; and which a little, a very little time, will better answer than I can : For I am not either a harden'd or shameless creature : If I were, I should not have been so solicitous to obtain the favour I sued for.

And permit me to say, that I asked it as well for my father and mother's sake, as for my own ; for I am sure, They at least will be uneasy, after I am gone, that they refused it to me.

I should still be glad to have theirs, and yours, Sir, and all your blessings, and your prayers : But, denied in such a manner, I will not presume again to ask it : Relying intirely on the Almighty's ; which is never denied, when supplicated for with such true penitence, as I hope mine is.

God preserve my dear uncle, and all my honoured friends ! prays

*Your unhappy CLARISSA HARLOWE.*

## LETTER CXI.

*Miss Howe, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.*

*Yarmouth, Isle of Wight, Monday, Aug. 7.*

*My dearest creature,*

I Can write just now but a few lines. I cannot tell how to bear the sound of that Mr. Belford for your Executor, cogent as your reasons for that measure are : And yet I am firmly of opinion, that none of your relations should be named for the trust. But I dwell the less upon this subject, as I hope (and cannot bear to apprehend the contrary) that you will still live many, many years.

Mr. Hickman, indeed, speaks very handsomely of Mr. Belford. But he, poor man ! has not much penetration. If he had, he would hardly think so well of *me* as he does.

VOL. VI.

R

I have

I have a particular opportunity of sending this by a friend of my aunt Harman's; who is ready to set out for London (and this occasions my hurry), and is to return out of hand: I expect therefore by him a large pacquet from you; and hope and long for news of your amended health: Which Heaven grant to the prayers of

*Your ever-affectionate*

ANNA HOWE.

## LETTER CXII.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss Howe.*

*Friday, Aug. 11.*

I Will send you a large pacquet, as you desire and expect; since I can do it by so safe a conveyance: But not all that is come to my hand—For I must own, that my friends are very severe; too severe for any-body who loves them not, to see their letters. You, my dear, would not call them my *friends*, you said, long ago; but my *relations*: Indeed I cannot call them my *relations*, I think!—But I am ill; and therefore, perhaps, more peevish than I should be. It is difficult to go out of ourselves to give a judgment against ourselves; and yet, oftentimes, to pass a *just* judgment, we ought.

I thought I should alarm you in the choice of my Executor. But the sad necessity I am reduced to must excuse me.

I shall not repeat any-thing I have said before on that subject: But if your objections will not be answered to your satisfaction, by the papers and letters I shall inclose, marked 1, 2, 3, 4, to 9, I must think myself in another instance unhappy; since I am engaged too far (and with my own judgment too) to recede.

As I have the accompanying transcripts from Mr. Bellford in confidence from his friend's letters to him, I must insist, that you suffer no soul but yourself to peruse them; and that you return them by the very first opportunity; that so no use may be made of them, that may do hurt either to the original writer, or to the communicator. You'll observe I am bound by promise to this care. If thro' my means any mischief should arise, between this *humane* and that *inhuman* libertine, I should think myself utterly inexcusable.

I sub-

I subjoin a list of the papers or letters I shall inclose. You must return them all, when perused (*a*).

I am very much tired and fatigued — with — I don't know what—with writing, I think—But most with myself, and with a situation I cannot help aspiring to get out of, and above!

O, my dear, 'tis a sad, a very sad world!—While under our parents protecting wings, we know nothing at all of it. Book-learned and a scribbler, and looking at people as I saw them as visitors or visiting, I thought I knew a great deal of it: Pitiable ignorance!—Alas! I knew nothing at all!

With zealous wishes for your happiness, and the happiness of every one dear to you, I am, and will ever be,

*Your gratefully-affectionate*

CL. HARLOWE.

### LETTER CXIII.

Mr. ANTONY HARLOWE, To Miss CL. HARLOWE.

[In reply to hers, to her uncle HARLOWE, of Thursday,  
Aug. 10.]

*Unhappy girl!*

*Aug. 12.*

AS your uncle Harlowe chooses not to answer your pert letter to him; and as mine written to you be-

- 
- (a) 1. A Letter from Miss Montague, dated - - - Aug. 1.  
2. A copy of my answer - - - Aug. 3.  
3. Mr. Belford's letter to me, which will shew you what my request was to him; and his compliance with it; and the desired extracts from his friend's letters. } Aug. 3, 4.  
4. A copy of my answer, with thanks; and requesting him to undertake the Executorship } Aug. 4.  
5. Mr. Belford's acceptance of the trust - - - Aug. 4.  
6. Miss Montague's letter, with a generous offer from Lord M. and the Ladies of that family } Aug. 7.  
7. Mr. Lovelace's to me - - - Aug. 7.  
8. Copy of mine to Miss Montague, in answer to hers of the day before } Aug. 8.  
9. Copy of my answer to Mr. Lovelace - - - Aug. 11.

You will see by these several letters, written and received in so little a space of time (to say nothing of what I have received and written, which I *cannot* shew you) how little opportunity or leisure I can have for writing my own story.

fore (a) was written as if it were in the spirit of prophecy, as you have found to your sorrow; and as you are now making yourself worse than you are in your health, and better than you are in your penitence, *as we are very well assured*, in order to move compassion; which you do not deserve, having had so much warning: For all these reasons, I take up my pen once more; tho' I had told your brother, *at his going to Edinburgh*, that I would not write to you, even were you to write to me, without letting him know. So indeed *bad we all*; for he prognosticated what would happen, as to your applying to us, when you knew not how to help it.

Brother John has hurt your niceness, it seems, by asking you a plain question, which your mother's heart is too full of grief to let her ask; and modesty will not let your sister ask, tho' but the consequence of your actions—And yet it *must* be answered, before you'll obtain from your father and mother, and us, the notice you hope for, I can tell you that.

You lived several guilty weeks with one of the vilest fellows that ever drew breath, at bed as well as board, no doubt (for is not his character known?); and pray don't be ashamed to be asked after what may naturally come of such free living. This modesty, indeed, would have become you for eighteen years of your life—You'll be pleased to mark that — but makes no good figure compared with your behaviour since the beginning of April last. So pray don't take it up, and wipe your mouth upon it, as if nothing had happened.

But, may be, I likewise am too shocking to your nice-ness!—Oh, girl, girl! your modesty had better been shewn at the right time and place! — Every-body, but you, believed what the Rake was: But you would believe nothing bad of him—What think you now?

Your folly has ruined all our peace. And who knows where it may yet end? — Your poor father but yesterday shewed me this text: With bitter grief he shewed it me, poor man! And do you lay it to your heart:

‘ A father waketh for his daughter, when no man knoweth; and the care for her taketh away his sleep—  
‘ When

' When she is young, lest she pass away the flower of her age (*and you know what proposals were made to you at different times*): And, being married, lest she should be hated: In her virginity, lest she should be defiled, and gotten with child in her father's house (*I don't make the words, mind that*): And, having an husband, lest she should misbehave herself.' *And what follows?* ' Keep a sure watch over a shameless daughter (*yet no watch could bold you!*), lest she make thee a laughing-stock to thine enemies (*as you have made us all to this cursed Lovelace*), and a bye-word in the city, and a reproach among the people, and make thee ashamed before the multitude.' *Eccl. xlii. 9, 10, &c.*

Now will you wish you had not written pertly. Your sister's severities!—Never, girl, say that is *severe*, that is *deserved*. You know the meaning of words. No-body better. Would to the Lord you had acted up but to one half of what you know. Then had we not been disappointed and grieved, as we all have been: And no-body more than him who was

*Your loving Uncle,*

ANTONY HARLOWE.

This will be with you to-morrow. Perhaps you may be suffered to have some part of your estate, after you have smarted a little more. Your pertly-answered uncle John, who is your trustee, will not have you be destitute. But we hope all is not true *that we bear of you*.—Only take care, I advise you, that, bad as you have acted, you act not still worse, if it be possible to act worse. *Improve upon the hint.*

## LETTER CXIV.

Miss CL. HARLOWE, To ANT. HARLOWE, Esq;

Honoured Sir,

Sunday, Aug. 13.

I AM very sorry for my pert letter to my uncle Harlowe. Yet I did not intend it to be pert. People new to misfortune may be too easily moved to impatience.

The fall of a regular person, no doubt, is dreadful and inexcusable. It is like the sin of apostasy. Would to Hea-

ven, however, that I had had the circumstances of mine inquired into!

If, Sir, I make myself worse than I am in my health, and better than I am in my penitence, it is fit I should be punished for my double dissimulation: And *you* have the pleasure of being one of my punishers. My sincerity in both respects will, however, be best justified by the event. To that I refer.—May Heaven give you always as much comfort in reflecting upon the reprobation I have met with, as you seem to have pleasure in mortifying a poor creature, *extremely* mortified; and that from a right sense, as she presumes to hope, of her own fault!

What you have *heard of me* I cannot tell. When the nearest and dearest relations give up an unhappy wretch, it is not to be wondered at, that those who are *not* related to her are ready to take up and propagate flanders against her. Yet I think I may defy calumny itself, and (excepting the fatal, tho' involuntary step of April 10.) wrap myself in my own innocence, and be easy. I thank you, Sir, nevertheless, for your *caution*, mean it what it will.

As to the question required of me to answer, and which is allowed to be too shocking either for a mother to put to a daughter, or a sister to a sister; and which, however, *you* say, I *must* answer.—O Sir!—And *must* I answer?—This then be my answer:—‘A little time, a much less time than is imagined, will afford a more satisfactory answer to my whole family, and even to my brother and sister, than I can give in words.’

Nevertheless, be pleased to let it be remembred, that I did not petition for a restoration to favour. I could not hope for that. Nor yet to be put in possession of any part of my own estate. Nor even for means of necessary subsistence from the produce of that estate—But only for a blessing; for a *last* blessing!

And this I will further add, because it is *true*, that I have no wilful crime to charge against myself: No free living at bed and at board, as you phrase it!

Why, why, Sir, were not other inquiries made of me, as well as this shocking one?—Inquiries that modesty *would* have permitted a mother or a sister to make; and which, if I

may

may be excused to say so, would have been still less improper, and more charitable, to have been made by uncles (were the mother *forbid*, or the sister *not inclined*, to make them), than those they have made.

Altho' my humble application has brought upon me so much severe reproach, I repent not that I have written to my mamma (altho' I cannot but wish that I had not written to my sister); because I have satisfied a dutiful consciousness by it, however unanswered by the wished-for success. Nevertheless, I cannot help saying, that mine is indeed a hard fate, that I cannot beg pardon for my capital error, without doing it in such terms, as shall be an aggravation of the offence.

But I had best leave off, lest, as my full mind, I find, is rising to my pen, I have other pardons to beg, as I multiply lines, where none at all will be given.

God Almighty bless, preserve, and comfort my dear sorrowing and grievously offended father and mother!—And continue in honour, favour, and merit, my happy sister!—May God forgive my brother, and protect him from the violence of his own temper, as well as from the destroyer of his sister's honour!—And may you, my dear uncle, and your no less now than ever dear brother, my second papa, as he used to bid me call him, be blessed and happy in them all, and in each other!—And, in order to this, may you all speedily banish from your remembrance for ever,

*The unhappy CLARISSA HARLOWE.*

## LETTER CXV.

*Mrs. NORTON, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.*

Monday, Aug. 14.

ALL your friends here, my dear young Lady, now seem set upon proposing to you to go to one of the Plantations. This, I believe, is owing to some misrepresentations of Mr. Brand; from whom they have received a letter.

I wish with all my heart, that you could, consistently with your own notions of honour, yield to the pressing requests of all Mr. Lovelace's family in his behalf. This,

I think, would stop every mouth; and, in time, reconcile every-body to you. For your own friends will not believe that he is in earnest to marry you; and the hatred between the families is such, that they will not condescend to inform themselves better; nor would believe *him*, if he were ever so solemnly to avow that he is.

I should be very glad to have in readiness, upon occasion, some brief particulars of your sad story under your own hand. But, let me tell you, at the same time, that no misrepresentations, nor even your own confession, shall lessen my opinion, either of your piety, or of your prudence in essential points; because I know it was always your humble way to make light faults heavy against yourself: And well might you, my dearest young Lady, aggravate your own failings, who have ever had so few; and those few so slight, that your ingenuity has turned most of them into excellencies.

Nevertheless, let me advise you, my dear Miss Clary, to discountenance any visits, that may, with the censorious, affect your character. As *that* has not hitherto suffered by your *wilful* default, I hope you will not, in a desponding negligence (satisfying yourself with a consciousness of your own innocence), permit it to suffer. Difficult situations, you know, my dear young Lady, are the tests not only of prudence, but of virtue.

I think, I must own to you, that, since Mr. Brand's letter has been received, I have a renewed prohibition to attend you. However, if you will give me leave, that shall not detain me from you. Nor would I stay for that leave, if I were not in hopes, that, in this critical situation, I may be able to do you service here.

I have often had messages and inquiries after your health, from the truly reverend Dr. Lewen, who has always expressed, and still expresses, infinite concern for you. He intirely disapproves of the measures of the family, with regard to you. He is too much indisposed to go abroad. But, were he in good health, he would not, as I understand, visit at Harlowe-Place; having been unhandsomely treated, some time ago, by your brother, on his offering to mediate between your family and you.

I AM just now informed, that your cousin Morden is arrived in England. He is at Canterbury, it seems, looking after some concerns he has there; and is soon expected in these parts. Who knows what may arise from his arrival? — God be with you, my dearest Miss Clary, and be your Comforter and Sustainer. And never fear but he will; for I am sure, I am very sure, that you put your whole trust in Him.

And what, after all, is this world, on which we so much depend for durable good, poor creatures that we are! — When all the joys of it, and (what is a balancing comfort) all the *troubles* of it, are but momentary, and vanish like a morning dream?

And be this remembred, my dearest young Lady, that worldly joy claims no kindred with the joys we are bid to aspire after. These latter we must be fitted for by affliction and disappointment. You are therefore in the direct road to glory, however thorny the path you are in. And I had almost said, that it depends upon yourself, by your patience, and by your resignedness to the dispensation (God enabling you, who never fails the true penitent, and sincere invoker), to be an heir of a blessed immortality.

But this glory, I humbly pray, that you may not be permitted to enter into, ripe as you are so soon likely to be for it, till with your gentle hand (a pleasure I have so often, as you know, promised to myself) you have closed the eyes of

*Your maternally-affectionate*

JUDITH NORTON.

## LETTER CXVI.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Mrs. NORTON.*

*Thursday, Aug. 17.*

WHAT Mr. Brand, or any-body, can have written or said to my prejudice, I cannot imagine; and yet some evil reports have gone out against me; as I find by some hints in a very severe letter written to me by my uncle Antony. Such a letter as I believe was never written to any poor creature, who, by ill health of body, as well as of mind, was before tottering on the brink of the grave.

But my friends may possibly be better justified than the reporters.—For who knows what they may have heard?

You give me a kind caution, which seems to imply more than you express, when you advise me against countenancing of visitors that may discredit me. You should, in so tender a point, my dear Mrs. Norton, have spoken quite out. Surely, I have had afflictions enow to make my mind fitted to bear any-thing. But I will not puzzle myself by *conjectural evils*. I *might*, if I had not enow that were *certain*. And I shall hear all, when it is thought proper that I should. Mean time, let me say, for your satisfaction, that I know not that I have any-thing criminal or disreputable to answer for either in word or deed, since the fatal 10th of April last.

You desire an account of what passes between me and my friends; and also particulars, or brief heads, of my sad story, in order to serve me as occasions shall offer. My dear good Mrs. Norton, you shall have a whole pacquet of papers, which I have sent to my Miss Howe, when she returns them; and you shall have, besides, another pacquet (and that with this letter), which I cannot at present think of sending to that dear friend, for the sake of my own *relations*; whom she is already but too eager to censure heavily. From these you will be able to collect a great deal of my story. But for what is previous to these papers, and which more particularly relates to what I have suffered from Mr. Lovelace, you must have patience; for at present I have neither head nor heart for such subjects. The papers I send you with this will be those mentioned in the margin (a). You must restore them to me, as soon as perused; and, upon your honour, make no use of any intelligence you have from me, but by my consent.

These communications you must not, my good Mrs. Norton,

- (a) 1. A copy of mine to my sister, begging off my father's malediction, dated July 21.  
 2. My sister's answer, dated July 27.  
 3. Copy of my second letter to my sister, dated July 29.  
 4. My sister's answer, dated Aug. 3.  
 5. Copy of my letter to my mother, dated Aug. 5.  
 6. My uncle Harlowe's letter, dated Aug. 7.  
 7. Copy of my answer to it, dated the 10th.  
 8. Letter from my uncle Antony, dated the 12th.  
 9. And, lastly, the copy of my answer to it, dated the 13th.

Norton, look upon as appeals against my relations. On the contrary, I am heartily sorry, that they have incurred the displeasure of so excellent a divine as Dr. Lewen. But you desire to have every-thing before you; and I think you *ought*; for who knows, as you say, but you may be applied to at last, to administer comfort from their conceding hearts, to one that wants it; and who sometimes, judging by what she knows of her own heart, thinks herself intitled to it?

I know, that I have a most indulgent and sweet-tempered mother; but, having to deal with violent spirits, she has too often forfeited that peace of mind, which she so much prefers, by her over-concern to preserve it.

I am sure she would not have turned me over for an answer to a letter written with so contrite and fervent a spirit, as was mine to her, to a *manly* spirit, had she been left to herself.

But, my dear Mrs. Norton, might not, think you, the revered lady have favoured me with one *private* line? — If not, might not she have permitted *you* to have written by her order, or connivance, one softening, one *motherly* line, when she saw her poor girl borne so hard upon?

No, she might not! — Because her heart, to be sure, is in their measures! — And if *she* think them right, perhaps they *must be right!* — At least knowing only what *they* know! — And yet they *might* know all, if they would! — And possibly, in their own good time, they think to make proper inquiry. — My application was made to them but *lately* — Yet how grievous will it be to their hearts, if *their* time should be *out of time!*

By the letters I have sent to Miss Howe, you will see, when you have them before you, that Lord M. and the Ladies of his family, jealous as they are of the honour of *their house* (to express myself in their language), think better of me than my own relations do. You will see an instance of their generosity to me, which has extremely affected me.

Some of the letters in the same pacquet will also let you into the knowlege of a strange step which I have taken (strange you will think it); and, at the same time, give you my reasons for it (a). It

(a) She means that of making Mr. Belford her Executor.

It must be expected, that situations uncommonly difficult will make necessary some extraordinary steps, which but for those situations would be hardly excuseable. It will be very happy indeed, and somewhat wonderful, if all the measures I have been driven to take should be right. A pure intention, void of all undutiful resentment, is what must be my consolation, whatever others may think of those measures, when they come to know them: Which, however, will hardly be till it is out of my power to justify them, or to answer for myself.

I am glad to hear of my cousin Morden's safe arrival. I should wish to see him methinks: But I am afraid, that he will sail with the stream; as it must be expected, that he will hear what they have to say first.—But what I most fear, is, that he will take upon himself to avenge me—Rather than this should happen, I would have him look upon me as a creature utterly unworthy of his concern; at least of his *w vindictive concern.*

How soothing to the wounded heart of your Clarissa, how balmy, are the assurances of your continued love and favour! — Love me, my dear mamma Norton, continue to love me to the end! — I now think, that I may, without presumption, promise to *deserve* your love to the end. And when I am gone, cherish my memory in your worthy heart; for in so doing you will cherish the memory of one, who loves and honours you more than she can express.

But when I am no more, get over, I charge you, as soon as you can, the smarting pangs of grief that will attend a recent loss; and let all be early turned into that sweetly-melancholy Regard to *M E M O R Y*, which, engaging us to forget all faults, and to remember nothing but what was thought amiable, gives more pleasure than pain to survivors — Especially if they can comfort themselves with the humble hope, that the Divine mercy has taken the dear departed to itself.

And what is the space of time to look backward upon, between an early departure and the longest survivance? — And what the consolation attending the sweet hope of meeting again, never more to be separated, never more to be pained, grieved, or aspersed! — But mutually blessing, and being blessed, to all eternity!

In the contemplation of this happy state, in which I hope, in God's good time, to rejoice with you, my beloved Mrs. Norton, and also with my dear relations, all reconciled to, and blessing the child against whom they are now so much incensed, I conclude myself

*Your ever-dutiful and affectionate*

**CLARISSA HARLOWE.**

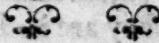
## LETTER CXVII.

*Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;.*

Sunday, Aug. 13.

I Don't know what a devil ails me ; but I never was so much indisposed in my life. At first, I thought some of my blessed relations here had got a dose administered to me, in order to get the whole house to themselves. But as I am the hopes of the family, I believe they would not be so wicked.

I must lay down my pen. I cannot write with any spirit at all. What a plague can be the matter with me !

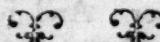


LORD M. paid me just now a cursed gloomy visit, to ask how I do after bleeding. His sisters both drove away yesterday, God be thanked. But they asked not my leave ; and hardly bid me good-bye. My Lord was more tender, and more dutiful than I expected. Men are less unforgiving than women. I have reason to say so, I am sure. For, besides implacable Miss Harlowe, and the old Ladies, the two Montague Apes han't been near me yet.



NEITHER eat, drink, nor sleep !—A piteous case, Jack ! If I should die like a fool now, people would say Miss Harlowe had broke my heart.—That she *vexes* me to the heart, is certain.

Confounded squeamish ! I would fain write it off. But must lay down my pen again. It won't do. Poor Lovelace !—What a devil ails thee ?



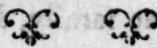
WELL, but now let's try for't—Hoy-Hoy-Hoy ! Confound me for a gaping puppy, how I yawn !—Where shall I be-

I begin? At thy Executorship?—Thou shalt have a double office of it: For I really think thou mayst send me a coffin and a shroud. I shall be ready for them by the time they can come down.

What a little fool is this Miss Harlowe! I warrant she'll now repent that she refused me. Such a lovely young widow—What a charming widow would she have made! How would she have adorned the weeds! To be a widow in the first twelvemonth is one of the greatest felicities that can befall a fine lady. Such pretty employment in *new dismal*, when she had hardly worn round her *blazing joy-fuls*! Such lights, and such shades! how would they set off one another, and be adorned by the wearer!—

Go to the devil!—I *will* write!—Can I do any-thing else?

They would not have me write, Belford.—I must be ill indeed, when I can't write.—



BUT thou seemest nettled, Jack! Is it because I was stung? It is not for two friends, any more than for man and wife, to be out of patience at one time.—What must be the consequence, if they are?—I am in no fighting mood just now: But as patient and passive as the chickens that are brought me in broth—For I am come to that already.

But I can tell thee, for all this, be *thy own man*, if thou wilt, as to the Executorship, I will never suffer thee to expose my letters. They are too ingenuous by half to be seen. And I absolutely insist upon it, that, on receipt of this, thou burn them all.

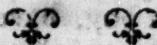
I will never forgive thee that impudent and unfriendly reflection, of my *cavaliering* it here over half a dozen persons of distinction:—Remember, too, thy poor *helpless orphan*—These reflections are too serious; and thou art also too serious, for me to let these things go off as jesting; notwithstanding the Roman style is preserved; and, indeed, but just preserved. By my soul, Jack, if I had not been taken thus egregiously cropfick, I would have been up with thee, and the lady too, before now.

But write on, however: And send me copies, if thou canst, of all that passes between our Charlotte and Miss Harlowe. I'll take no notice of what thou communicatest of that sort. I like not the people here the worse for their generous

generous

generous offer to the lady. But you see she is as proud as implacable. There's no obliging her. She'd rather sell her cloaths, than be beholden to any-body, altho' she would oblige by permitting the obligation.

Oh Lord ! Oh Lord !—Mortal ill—Adieu, Jack !



I WAS forced to leave off, I was so ill, at this place. And what dost think ? My uncle brought the parson of the parish to pray by me ; for his chaplain is at Oxford. I was lain down in my night-gown over my waistcoat, and in a doze : And, when I open'd my eyes, who should I see, but the parson kneeling on one side the bed ; Lord M. on the other ; Mrs. Greme, who had been sent for to tend me, as they call it, at the feet : God be thanked, my Lord, said I, in an ecstasy !—Where's Miss ? — For I thought they were going to marry me.

They thought me delirious, at first, and pray'd louder and louder.

This roused me : Off the bed I started ; slid my feet into my slippers ; put my hand in my waistcoat pocket, and pulled out thy letter with my Beloved's meditations in it : My Lord, Dr. Wright, Mrs. Greme, you have thought me a very wicked fellow : But, see ! I can read you as good as you can read me.

They stared at one another. I gaped, and read, Poor mo-or-tals the cau-o-ause of their own — their own mis-ser-ry.

It is as suitable to my case, as to the lady's, as thou'l observe, if thou readest it again (a). At the passage where it is said, That when a man is chastened for sin, his beauty consumes away, I stept to the glass : A poor figure, by Jupiter, cried I !—And they all praised and admired me ; lifted up their hands and their eyes ; and the Doctor said, He always thought it impossible, that a man of my sense could be so wild as the world said I was. My Lord chuckled for joy ; congratulated me ; and, thank my dear Miss Harlowe, I got high reputation among good, bad, and indifferent. In short, I have established myself for ever with all here.—But, O Belford, even this will not do !—I must leave off again.

(a) See p. 352.



A VISIT from the Montague sisters, led in by my hobbling uncle, to congratulate my amendment and reformation both in one. What a lucky event this illness, with this meditation in my pocket; for we were all to pieces before! Thus, when a boy, have I joined with a croud coming out of church, and have been thought to have been there myself.

I am incensed at the insolence of the young Levite. Thou wilt highly oblige me, if thou'l find him out, and send me his ears in the next letter.

My charmer mistakes me, if she thinks I proposed her writing to me, as an alternative that should dispense with my attendance upon her. That it shall *not* do, nor did I intend it should, unless she had pleased me better in the contents of it than she has done. Bid her read again. I gave no such hopes. I would have been with her in spite of you both, by to-morrow, at farthest, had I not been laid by the heels thus, like a helpless miscreant.

But I grow better and better every hour, I say: The Doctor says not: But I am sure I know best: And I will soon be in London, depend on't. But say nothing of this to my dear, cruel, and implacable Miss Harlowe.

A-dieu-u, Ja-aack—What a gaping puppy (Yaw-n! yaw-n! yaw-n!) I was told — and then to see —

*Thy LOVELACE.*

## LETTER CXVIII.

*Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;*

*Monday, Aug. 14.*

I Am extremely concerned for thy illness. I should be very sorry to lose thee. Yet, if thou diest so soon, I could wish, from my soul, it had been before the beginning of last April: And this as well for thy sake, as for the sake of the most excellent woman in the world: For then thou wouldest not have had the most crying sin of thy life to answer for.

I was told on Saturday, that thou wert very much out of order; and this made me forbear writing till I heard further. Harry, on his return from thee, confirmed the

bad

bad way thou art in. But I hope Lord M. in his unmerited tenderness for thee, thinks the worst of thee. What can it be, Bob? A violent fever, they say; but attended with odd and severe symptoms.

I will not trouble thee, in the way thou art in, with what passes here with Miss Harlowe. I wish thy repentance as swift as thy illness; and as efficacious, if thou diest; for it is else to be feared, that She and You will never meet in one place.

I told her how ill you are. Poor man! said she. *Dangerously ill, say you?*

Dangerously indeed, Madam! — So Lord M. sends me word!

God be merciful to him, if he die! said the admirable creature.— Then, after a pause, Poor wretch! — May he meet with the mercy he has not shewn!

I send this by a special messenger: For I am impatient to hear how it goes with thee.— If I have received thy *last* letter, what melancholy reflections will that *last*, so full of shocking levity, give to

*Thy true Friend,*

JOHN BELFORD.

## LETTER CXIX.

*Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;*

*Tuesday, Aug. 15.*

**T**HANK thee, Jack, most heartily I thank thee, for the sober conclusion of thy *last*! — I have a good mind, for the sake of it, to forgive thy till-now absolutely unpardonable extracts.

But dost think I will lose such an angel, such a *forgiving* angel, as this? — By my soul, I will not! — To pray for mercy for such an ingrateful miscreant! — How she wounds, how she cuts me to the soul, by her exalted generosity! — But SHE must have mercy upon me first! — Then will she teach me a reliance, for the sake of which her prayer for me will be answered.

But hasten, hasten to me, particulars of her health, of her employments, of her conversation.

I am sick only of love! — O that I could have called her mine! — It would then have been worth while to be sick!

fick!—To have sent for her down to me from town; and to have had her, with healing in her dove-like wings, flying to my comfort; her duty and her choice to pray for me, and to bid me live for her sake!—O Jack! what an angel have I!—

But I *have not* lost her!—I *will not* lose her! I am almost well; should be quite well but for these prescribing rascals, who, to do credit to their skill, will make the disease of importance.—And I will make her mine!—And be sick again, to intitle myself to her *dutiful* tenderness, and *pious* as well as *personal* concern!

God for ever bless her!—Hasten, hasten particulars of her!—I am sick of love!—Such generous goodness!—By all that's great and good, I will not lose her! So tell her!— She says, That she could not pity me, if she thought of being mine! This, according to Miss Howe's transcriptions to Charlotte— But bid her hate me, and have me: And my behaviour to her shall soon turn that hate to love!—For, body and mind, I will be wholly hers.

## LETTER CXX.

*Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;*

*Thursday, Aug. 17.*

I Am sincerely rejoiced to hear that thou art already so much amended, as thy servant tells me thou art. Thy letter looks as if thy morals were mending with thy health. This was a letter I *could shew*, as I *did*, to the lady.

She is very ill (Cursed letters received from her implacable family!): So I could not have much conversation with her, in thy favour, upon it.—But what passed will make thee more and more adore her.

She was very attentive to me, as I read it; and, when I had done, Poor man! said she; what a letter is this! He had timely instances, that my temper was not ungenerous, if generosity could have obliged him! But his remorse, and that for *his own* sake, is all the punishment I wish him.—Yet I must be more reserved, if you write to him every-thing I say!

I extolled her unbounded goodness—How could I help it, tho' to her face!

No goodness in it ! she said—It was a frame of mind she had endeavoured after for her own sake. She suffered too much in want of mercy, not to wish it to a penitent heart.—He *seems* to be penitent, said she ; and it is not for me to judge beyond appearances.—If he be not, he deceives himself more than any-body else.

She was so ill, that this was all that passed on the occasion.

What a fine subject for Tragedy would the injuries of this lady, and her behaviour under them, both with regard to her implacable friends, and to her persecutor, make ! With a grand objection as to the moral, nevertheless (a) ; for here virtue is punished ! Except indeed we look forward to the rewards of *HEREAFTER*, which, morally, *she* must be sure of, or who can ? Yet, after all, I know not, so sad a fellow art thou, and so vile an husband mightest thou have made, whether her virtue is not rewarded in missing thee : For things the most grievous to human nature, when they happen, as this charming creature once observed, are often the happiest for us in the event.

I have frequently thought, in my attendance on this lady, That if Belton's admired author, Nic. Rowe, had had such a character before him, he would have drawn another sort of a penitent than he *has* done, or given his Play, which he calls *The Fair Penitent*, a fitter title. Miss Harlowe is a penitent indeed ! I think, if I am not guilty of a contradiction in terms, a penitent without a fault ; her parents conduct towards her from the first considered.

The whole story of the other is a pack of damn'd stuff. Lothario, 'tis true, seems such another wicked ungenerous varlet as thou know'lt who : The author knew how to draw a Rake ; but not to paint a Penitent. Calista is a desiring luscious wench, and her penitence is nothing else but

(a) Mr. Belford's objection, That virtue ought not to suffer in a Tragedy, is not well considered : Monimia in the *Orphan*, Belvidera in *Venice Preserv'd*, Athenais in *Theodosius*, Cordelia in Shakespeare's *King Lear*, Desdemona in *Othello*, Hamlet, to name no more, are instances, that a Tragedy could hardly be justly called a Tragedy, if virtue did not temporarily suffer, and vice for a while triumph. But he recovers himself in the same paragraph ; and leads us to look up to the *FUTURE* for the Reward of Virtue, and for the Punishment of Guilt : And observes not amiss, when he says, He knows not but that the virtue of such a woman as Clarissa is rewarded in missing such a man as Lovelace,

but rage, insolence, and scorn. Her passions are all storm and tumult; nothing of the finer passions of the Sex, which, if naturally drawn, will distinguish themselves from the masculine passions, by a softness that will even shine thro' rage and despair. Her character is made up of deceit and disguise. She has no virtue; is all pride; and her devil is as much *within* her, as *without* her.

How then can the fall of such a one create a proper distress, when all the circumstances of it are considered? For does she not brazen out her crime, even after detection? Knowing her own guilt, she calls for Altamont's vengeance on his best friend, as if he had traduced her; yields to marry Altamont, tho' criminal with another; and actually beds that whining puppy, when she had given up herself body and soul to Lothario; who, nevertheless, refused to marry her.

Her penitence, when begun, she justly styles *The phrensy of her soul*; and, as I said, after having, as long as she could, most audaciously brazened out her crime, and done all the mischief she could do (occasioning the death of Lothario, of her father, and others), she stabs herself.

And can this be an act of penitence?

But, indeed, our poets hardly know how to create a distress without horror and murder; and must shock your soul, to bring tears from your eyes.

Altamont indeed, who is an amorous blockhead, a credulous cuckold, and (tho' painted as a brave fellow, and a soldier)—a whining Tom Essence, and a quarreller with his best friend, dies like a fool, without sword or pop-gun, of mere grief and nonsense, for one of the vilest of her sex: But the *Fair Penitent*, as she is called, dies by her own hand; and, having no title by her past crimes to *laudable* pity, forfeits all claim to *true* penitence, and, in all probability, to future mercy.

But here is Miss HARLOWE, virtuous, noble, wife, pious, unhappily insnared by the vows and oaths of a vile Rake, whom she believes to be a man of honour: And, being ill used by her friends for *his sake*, is in a manner forced to throw herself upon his protection; who, in order to obtain her confidence, never scruples the deepest and most solemn protestations of honour. After a series of plots and

and contrivances, all baffled by her virtue and vigilance, he basely has recourse to the vilest of arts, and, to rob her of her honour, is forced first to rob her of her senses. Unable to bring her, notwithstanding, to his ungenerous views of cohabitation, she awes him in the very entrance of a fresh act of premeditated guilt, in presence of the most abandoned of women, assembled to assist his cursed purpose; triumphs over them all, by virtue only of her innocence; and escapes from the vile hands he had put her into: Nobly, not frantically, resents: Refuses to see, or to marry the wretch; who, repenting his usage of so divine a creature, would fain move her to forgive his baseness, and make him her husband: And, tho' persecuted by all her friends, and abandoned to the deepest distress, obliged, from ample fortunes, to make away with her apparel for subsistence, surrounded by strangers, and forced (in want of others) to make a friend of the friend of her seducer. Tho' longing for death, and making all the proper preparatives for it, convinced that grief and ill usage have broken her noble heart, she abhors the impious thought of shortening her allotted period; and, as much a stranger to revenge as despair, is able to forgive the author of her ruin; wishes his repentance, and that she may be the last victim to his barbarous perfidy: And is solicitous for nothing so much in this life, as to prevent vindictive mischief *to and from* the man, who has used her so basely.

This is penitence! This is piety! And hence a distress naturally arises, that must *worthily* affect every heart.

Whatever the ill-usage of this excellent lady is from her relations, it breaks not out into excesses: She strives, on the contrary, to find reason to justify them at her own expense; and seems more concerned for their cruelty to her for their sakes hereafter, when she shall be no more, than for her own: For, as to herself, she is sure, she says, God will forgive her, tho' no-body else will.

On every extraordinary provocation she has recourse to the Scriptures, and endeavours to regulate her vehemence by sacred precedents. Better people, she says, have been more afflicted than she, grievous as she sometimes thinks her afflictions: And shall she not bear what less faulty persons have born? On the very occasion I have mentioned

tioned (some new instances of implacableness from her friends) the inclosed meditation will shew, how mildly she complains, and yet how forcibly. See if thou, in the wicked levity of thy heart, canst apply it as thou didst the other, to thy case: If thou canst not, give way to thy conscience, and That will make the properest application.

## M E D I T A T I O N.

*H*OW long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words!

*B*e it indeed that I have erred, mine error remaineth with myself.

*T*o her that is afflicted, pity shoulde shewen from her friend.

*B*ut she that is ready to slip with her feet, is as a lamp despised in the thought of them that are at ease.

*T*here is a shame which bringeth sin, and there is a shame which bringeth glory and grace.

*H*ave pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye, my friends! for the hand of God hath touched me.

*I*f your soul were in my soul's stead, I also could speak as ye do: I could heap up words against you —

*B*ut I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should assuage your grief.

*W*hy will ye break a leaf driven to and fro? Why will ye pursue the dry stubble? Why will ye write bitter words against me, and make me possess the iniquities of my youth?

*M*ercy is seasonable in the time of affliction, as clouds of rain in the time of drought.

*A*re not my days few? Cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little—Before I go whence I shall not return; even to the land of darkness, and shadow of death!

## P O S T S C R I P T.

*T*HIS excellent lady is informed, by a letter from Mrs. Norton, that Colonel Morden is just arrived in England. He is now the only person she wishes to see.

I expressed some jealousy upon it, lest he should have place given over me in the Executorship. She said, That she had no thoughts to do so now; for that such a trust, were he to accept of it (which she doubted) might, from the nature of some of the papers which in that case would necessarily pass through his hands, occasion mischiefs between my friend and him, that would be worse than death for her to think of.

Poor Belton, I hear, is at death's door. A messenger is just come from him, who tells me, He cannot die till he sees me. I hope the poor fellow will not go off yet; since neither his affairs in this world, nor for the other, are in tolerable order. I cannot avoid going to the poor man. Yet am unwilling to stir, till I have an assurance from thee, that thou wilt not disturb the lady: For I know he will be very loth to part with me, when he gets me to him. Tourville tells me how fast thou mendest: Let me conjure thee not to think of molesting this incomparable woman. For thy own sake I request this, as well as for hers, and for the sake of thy given promise: For, should she die within a few weeks, as I fear she will, it will be said, and perhaps too justly, that thy visit has hastened her end.

In hopes thou wilt not, I wish thy perfect recovery: Else, that thou mayst relapse, and be confined to thy bed.

## LETTER CXXI.

*Mr. BELFORD, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.*

Madam, Sat. morn. Aug. 19.

I Think myself obliged in honour to acquaint you, that I am afraid Mr. Lovelace will try his fate by an interview with you.

I wish to Heaven you could prevail upon yourself to receive his visit. All that is respectful, even to veneration, and all that is penitent, will you see in his behaviour, if you can admit of it. But as I am obliged to set out directly for Epsom (to perform, as I apprehend, the last friendly offices for poor Mr. Belton, whom once you saw) and as I think it more likely, that Mr. Lovelace will not be prevailed upon, than that he *will*, I thought fit to give you this intimation, lest otherwise, if he should come, you should be too much surprised.

He flatters himself, that you are not so ill as I represent you to be. When he sees you, he will be convinced, that the most obliging things he can do, will be as proper to be done for the sake of his own future peace of mind, as for your health-sake; and, I dare say, in fear of hurting the latter, he will forbear the thoughts of any further intrusion; at least while you are so much indisposed: So that *one half-hour's shock*, if it *will* be a shock to see the unhappy man (but just got up himself from a dangerous fever), will be all you will have occasion to stand.

I beg you will not too much hurry and discompose  
yourself.

yourself. It is impossible he can be in town till Monday, at soonest. And if he resolve to come, I hope to be at Mr. Smith's before him.

I am, Madam, with the profoundest veneration,

*Your most faithful and most obedient Servant,*

J. BELFORD.

## LETTER CXXII.

*Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq.*

[*In Answer to his of Aug. 17. p. 376.]*

Sunday, Aug. 20.

WHAT an unmerciful fellow art thou! A man has no need of a conscience, who has such an impertinent monitor. But if Nic. Rowe wrote a Play that answers not his title, am I to be reflected upon for that? —I have finned! I repent! I would repair!—She forgives my sin! She accepts my repentance! But she won't let me repair!—What wouldst have me do?

But get thee gone to Belton, as soon as thou canst. Yet whether thou goest or not, up I must go, and see what I can do with the sweet oddity myself. The moment these prescribing varlets will let me, depend upon it, I go. Nay, Lord M. thinks she ought to permit me one interview. His opinion has great authority with me—when it squares with my own: And I have assured him, and my two cousins, that I will behave with all the decency and respect, that man can behave with to the person whom he *most* respects. And so I will. Of this, if thou choosest not to go to Belton mean time, thou shalt be witness.

Colonel Morden, thou hast heard me say, is a man of honour and bravery:—But Colonel Morden has had his girls, as well as you and I. And indeed, either openly or secretly, who has not? The devil always baits with a pretty wench, when he angles for a man, be his age, rank, or degree, what it will.

I have often heard my Beloved speak of the Colonel with great distinction and esteem. I wish he could make matters a little easier, for her mind's sake, between the rest of the implacables and herself.

Methinks I am sorry for honest Belton. But a man cannot

cannot be ill, or vapourish, but thou liftest up thy shriek-owl note, and killest him immediately. None but a fellow, who is fit for a drummer in death's forlorn-hope, could take so much delight, as thou dost, in beating a dead-march with thy goose-quills.

I shall call thee seriously to account, when I see thee, for the extracts thou hast given the lady from my letters, notwithstanding what I said in my last; especially if she continue to refuse me. An hundred times have I known a woman deny, yet comply at last: But, by these extracts, thou hast, I doubt, made her bar up the door of her heart, as she used to do her chamber-door, against me. — This therefore is a disloyalty that friendship cannot bear, nor honour allow me to forgive.

## LETTER CXXIII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;.

London, Aug. 21. Monday.

I Believe I am bound to curse thee, Jack. Nevertheless I won't anticipate, but proceed to write thee a longer letter, than thou hast had from me for some time past. So here goes.

That thou mightest have as little notice as possible of the time I was resolved to be in town, I set out in my Lord's chariot and six yesterday, as soon as I had dispatched my letter to thee, and arrived in town last night: For I knew I could have no dependance on thy friendship, where Miss Harlowe's humour was concerned.

I had no other place so ready, and so was forced to go to my old lodgings, where also my wardrobe is; and there I poured out millions of curses upon the whole crew, and refused to see either Sally or Polly; and this not only for suffering the lady to escape; but for the villainous arrest, and for their insolence to her at the officer's house.

I dress'd myself in a never-worn suit, which I had intended for one of my wedding-suits:— And liked myself so well, that I began to think with thee, that my outside was the best of me.

I took a chair to Smith's, my heart bounding in almost audible thumps to my throat, with the assured expectation

of seeing my Beloved. I clasped my fingers, as I was danced along : I charged my eyes to languish and sparkle by turns : I talked to my knees, telling them how they must bend ; and, in the language of a charming describer, acted my part in fancy, as well as spoke it to myself :

*Tenderly kneeling, thus will I complain :  
Thus court her pity ; and thus plead my pain :  
Thus sigh for fancied frowns, if frowns should rise ;  
And thus meet favour in her softning eyes.*

In this manner entertained I myself, till I arrived at Smith's ; and there the fellows set down their gay burden. Off went their hats ; Will, ready at hand in a new livery ; up went the head ; out rush'd my Honour ; the woman behind the compter all in flutters ;—respect and fear giving due solemnity to her features ; and her knees, I doubt not, knocking against the inside of her wainscot fence.

Your servant, Madam—Will, let the fellows move to some distance, and wait.

You have a young lady lodges here ; Miss Harlowe, Madam : Is she above ?

Sir, Sir, and please your Honour [The woman is struck with my figure, thinks I] : Miss Harlowe, Sir ! There is, indeed, such a young lady lodges here—But, but—

But what, Madam ? — I must see her. — One pair of stairs ; is it not ? — Don't trouble yourself—I shall find her apartment. And was making towards the stairs.

Sir, Sir, the lady, the lady is not at home—She is abroad—She is in the country—

In the country ! Not at home ! — Impossible ! You will not pass this story upon me, good woman. I must see her. I have business of life and death with her.

Indeed, Sir, the lady is not at home ! Indeed, Sir, she is abroad ! —

She then rung a bell : John, cried she, pray step down ! — Indeed, Sir, the lady is not at home.

Down came John, the good man of the house, when I expected one of his journeymen, by her sawcy familiarity.

My dear, said she, the gentleman will not believe Miss Harlowe is abroad.

John bow'd to my fine cloaths, Your servant, Sir—Indeed

deed the lady is abroad. She went out of town this morning by six o'clock—into the country—by the Doctor's advice.

Still I would not believe either John or his wife. I am sure, said I, she cannot be abroad. I heard she was very ill—She is not able to go out in a coach. Do you know Mr. Belford, friend?

Yes, Sir; I have the honour to know 'Squire Belford. He is gone into the country to visit a sick friend. He went on Saturday, Sir.

This had also been told from thy lodgings to Will, whom I sent to desire to see thee, on my first coming to town.

Well, and Mr. Belford wrote me word that she was exceeding ill. How then can she be gone out?

O Sir, she is very ill; very ill, indeed—Could hardly walk to the coach.

Belford, thought I, *bimself* knew nothing of the time of my coming; neither can he have received my letter of yesterday: And so ill, 'tis impossible she would go out.

Where is her servant? Call her servant to me.

Her servant, Sir, is her nurse: She has no other. And *she* is gone with her.

Well, friend, I must not believe you. You'll excuse me; but I must go up stairs myself. And was stepping up.

John hereupon put on a serious, and a less respectful face—Sir, this house is mine; and —

*And what, friend?* not doubting then but she was above.—I must and will see her. I have authority for it. I am a justice of peace. I have a search warrant.

And up I went; they following me, muttering, and in a plaguy flutter.

The first door I came to was lock'd. I tapp'd at it.

The lady, Sir, has the key of her own apartment.

On the inside, I question not, my honest friend; tapping again. And being assured, if she heard my voice, that her timorous and soft temper would make her betray herself, by some flutters, to my listening ear, I said aloud, I am confident Miss Harlowe is here: Dearest Madam, open the door: Admit me but for one moment to your presence.

But neither answer nor fluttering saluted my ear ; and, the people being very quiet, I led on to the next apartment ; and, the key being on the outside, I opened it, and looked all round it, and into the closet.

The man said, He never saw so uncivil a gentleman in his life.

Hark thee, friend, said I ; Let me advise thee to be a little decent ; or I shall teach thee a lesson thou never learnedst in all thy life.

Sir, said he, 'tis not like a gentleman, to affront a man in his own house.

Then pr'ythee, man, replied I, don't crow upon thine own dunghill.

I stepped back to the locked door : My dear Miss Harlowe, I beg of you to open the door, or I'll break it open ;—pushing hard against it, that it crack'd again.

The man looked pale ; and, trembling and with his fright, made a plaguy long face ; and called to one of his bodice-makers above, Joseph, come down quickly.

Joseph came down : A lion's-face grinning fellow ; thick, and short, and bushy-headed, like an old oak-pollard. Then did master John put on a sturdier look. But I only humm'd a tune, travers'd all the other apartments, sounded the passages with my knuckles, to find whether there were private doors, and walked up the next pair of stairs, singing all the way ; John, and Joseph, and Mrs. Smith, following me trembling.

I looked round me there, and went into two open-door bed-chambers ; searched the closets, the passages, and peeped thro' the key-hole of another : No Miss Harlowe, by Jupiter ! What shall I do !—What shall I do !—Now will she be grieved that she is out of the way.

I said this on purpose to find out whether these people knew the lady's story ; and had the answer I expected from Mrs. Smith—I believe not, Sir, said she.

Why so, Mrs. Smith ? Do you know who I am ?

I can guess, Sir.

Whom do you guess me to be ?

Your name is Mr. Lovelace, Sir, I make no doubt.

The very same. But how came you to guess so well, dame Smith ? You never saw me before—Did you ?

Here,

Here, Jack, I laid out for a compliment, and missed it.  
'Tis easy to guess, Sir; for there cannot be two such gentlemen as you.

Well said, dame Smith—But mean you *good or bad?*—  
*Handsome* was the least I thought she would have said.

I leave you to guess, Sir.

Condemned, thinks I, by myself, on this appeal.

Why, father Smith, thy wife is a wit, man!—Didst thou ever find that out before?—But where is widow Lovick, dame Smith? My cousin John Belford says she is a very good woman. Is she within? Or is *she* gone with Miss Harlowe too?

She will be within by-and-by, Sir. She is not with the lady.

Well, but my good dear Mrs. Smith, where is the lady gone? And when will she return?

I can't tell, Sir.

Don't tell fibs, dame Smith; don't tell fibs; chucking her under the chin: Which made John's upper-lip, with chin shortened, rise to his nose—I am sure you know!—But here's another pair of stairs: Let us see; Who lives up there?—But hold, here's another room lock'd up, tapping at the door—Who's at home, cry'd I?

That's Mrs. Lovick's apartment. She is gone out, and has the key with her.

Widow Lovick! rapping again, I believe you are at home: Pray open the door.

John and Joseph muttered and whispered together.

No whispering, honest friends: 'Tis not manners to whisper. Joseph, what said John to thee?

JOHN, Sir! disdainfully repeated the good woman.

I beg pardon, Mrs. Smith: But you see the force of example. Had *you* shewed your honest man more respect, *I* should. Let me give you a piece of advice:—Women who treat their husbands irreverently, teach strangers to use them with contempt. There, honest master John; why dost not pull off thy hat to me?—O, so thou wouldest, if thou hadst it on: But thou never wearest thy hat in thy wife's presence, I believe; dost thou?

None of your fleers and your jeers, Sir, cry'd John. I wish every married pair lived as happily as we do.

I wish so too, honest friend. But I'll be hang'd if thou haft any children.

Why so, Sir?

Haft thou?—Answer me, man: Haft thou, or not?

Perhaps not, Sir. But what of that?

What of that?—Why I'll tell thee. The man who has no children by his wife must put up with plain John. Hadst thou a child or two, thou'dst be called Mr. Smith, with a courtesy, or a smile at leaft, at every word.

You are very pleasant, Sir, replied my dame. I fancy, if either my husband or I had as much to answer for as I know whom, we should not be so merry.

Why then, dame Smith, so much the worse for those who were obliged to keep you company. But I am not merry—I am sad!—Hey-ho!—Where shall I find my dear Miss Harlowe?

My beloved Miss Harlowe! (calling at the foot of the third pair of stairs) if you are above, for God's sake answer me. I am coming up.

Sir, said the good man, I wish you'd walk down. The servants rooms, and the working rooms, are up those stairs, and another pair; and no-body's there that you want.

Shall I go up, and see if Miss Harlowe be there, Mrs. Smith?

You may, Sir, if you please.

Then I won't; for, if she was, you would not be so obliging.

I am ashamed to give you all this attendance: You are the politest traders I ever knew. Honest Joseph, slapping him upon the shoulders on a sudden, which made him jump, didst ever grin for a wager, man?—For the rascal seemed not displeased with me; and, cracking his flat face from ear to ear, with a distended mouth, shew'd his teeth, as broad and as black as his thumb-nails. But don't I hinder thee? What canst earn a-day, man?

Half a crown, I can earn a-day; with an air of pride and petulance, at being startled.

There then is a day's wages for thee. But thou needest not attend me further.

Come, Mrs. Smith, come, John, master Smith I should say;

say ; let's walk down, and give me an account where the lady is gone, and when she will return.

So down stairs led I. John and Joseph (tho' I had discharged the latter), and my dame, following me, to shew their complaisance to a stranger.

I re-entered one of the first-floor rooms. I have a great mind to be your lodger : For I never saw such obliging folks in my life. What rooms have you to lett ?

None at all, Sir.

I am sorry for that. But whose is this ?

Mine, Sir, chuffily said John.

Thine, man ! Why then I will take it of thee. This, and a bed-chamber, and a garret for my servant, will content me. I will give thee thy own price, and half a guinea a day over, for those conveniences.

For ten guineas a day, Sir —

Hold, John ! Master Smith, I should say—Before thou speakest, consider—I won't be affronted, man.

Sir, I wish you'd walk down, said the good woman. Really, Sir, you take —

Great liberties I hope you would not say, Mrs. Smith ?

Indeed, Sir, I was going to say something like it.

Well, then, I am glad I prevented you ; for the words better become my mouth than yours. But I must lodge with you till the lady returns. I *believe* I must. However, you may be wanted in the shop ; so we'll talk that over there.

Down I went, they paying diligent attendance on my steps.

When I came into the shop, seeing no chair or stool, I went behind the compter, and sat down under an arched kind of canopy of carved-work, which these proud traders, emulating the royal nich-fillers, often give themselves, while a joint-stool, perhaps, serves those by whom they get their bread : Such is the dignity of trade in this mercantile nation !

I looked about me, and above me, and told them I was very proud of my seat ; asking, If John were ever permitted to fill this superb nich ?

Perhaps he was, he said, very surlily.

That is it, cry'd I, that makes thee look so like a statue, man.

John looked plaguy glum upon me. But his man Joseph and my man Will, turned round with their backs to us, to hide their grinning, with each his fist in his mouth.

I asked, What it was they sold ?

Powder, and wash-balls, and snuff, they said ; and gloves and stockens.

O come, I'll be your customer. Will, do I want wash-balls ?

Yes, and please your Honour, you can dispense with one or two.

Give him half a dozen, dame Smith.

She told me she must come where I was, to serve them. Pray, Sir, walk from behind the compter.

Indeed but I won't. The shop shall be mine : Where are they, if a customer should come in ?

She pointed over my head, with a purse-mouth, as if she would not have simper'd, could she have help'd it. I reached down the glass, and gave Will six. There—put 'em up, sirrah.

He did, grinning with his teeth out before ; which touching my conscience, as the loss of them was owing to me, Joseph, said I, come hither. Come hither, man, when I bid thee.

He stalked towards me, his hands behind him, half willing, and half unwilling.

I suddenly wrapt my arm round his neck. Will, thy penknife, this moment. D—n the fellow, where's thy penknife ?

O Lord ! said the pollard-headed dog, struggling to get his head loose from under my arm, while my other hand was muzzling about his cursed chaps, as if I would take his teeth out.

I will pay thee a good price, man : Don't struggle thus ! The penknife, Will !

O Lord ! cry'd Joseph, struggling still more and more : And out comes Will's pruning-knife ; for the rascal is a gardener in the country. I have only this, Sir.

The best in the world to launch a gum. D—n the fellow, why dost struggle thus ?

Master and Mistress Smith being afraid, I suppose, that I had a design upon Joseph's throat, because he was their champion

champion (and this, indeed, made me take the more notice of him), coming towards me with countenances tragicomical, I let him go.

I only wanted, said I, to take out two or three of this rascal's broad teeth, to put them into my servant's jaws—And I would have paid him his price for them.—I would, by my soul, Joseph.

Joseph shook his ears; and with both hands stroaked down, smooth as it would lie, his bushy hair; and looked at me, as if he knew not whether he should laugh or be angry: But, after a stupid stare or two, stalked off to the other end of the shop, nodding his head at me as he went, still stroaking down his hair, and took his stand by his master, facing about, and muttering, that I was plaguy strong in the arms, and he thought would have throttled him. Then folding his arms, and shaking his bristled head, added, 'Twas well I was a gentleman, or he would not have taken such an affront.

I demanded where their rappee was? The good woman pointed to the place; and I took up a scollop-shell of it, refusing to let her weigh it, and filled my box. And now, Mrs. Smith, said I, where are your gloves?

She shewed me; and I chose four pair of them, and set Joseph, who looked as if he wanted to be taken notice of again, to open the fingers.

A female customer, who had been gaping at the door, came in for some Scots snuff; and I would serve her. The wench was plaguy homely; and I told her so; or else, I said, I would have treated her. She in anger (No woman is homely in her own opinion) threw down her peny; and I put it in my pocket.

Just then, turning my eye to the door, I saw a pretty genteel lady, with a footman after her, peeping in with a What's the matter, good folks? to the starers; and I ran to her from behind the compter, and, as she was making off, took her hand, and drew her into the shop, begging that she would be my customer; for that I had but just begun trade.

What do you sell, Sir, said she, smiling; but a little surprised?

Tapes, ribbands, silk-laces, pins, and needles; for I am

a pedlar : Powder, patches, wash-balls, stockens, garters, snuffs, and pin-cushions—Don't we, goody Smith ?

So in I gently drew her to the compter, running behind it myself, with an air of great diligence and obligingness. I have excellent gloves and wash-balls, Madam ; Rappee, Scots, Portugal, and all sorts of snuff.

Well, said she, in very good humour, I'll encourage a young beginner for once. Here, Andrew (to her footman) you want a pair of gloves, don't you ?

I took down a parcel of gloves, which Mrs. Smith pointed to, and came round to the fellow to fit them on myself.

No matter for opening them, said I : Thy fingers, friend, are as stiff as drumsticks. Push—Thou'rt an awkward dog ! I wonder such a pretty lady will be followed by such a clumsy varlet.

The fellow had no strength for laughing : And Joseph was mightily pleased, in hopes, I suppose, I would borrow a few of Andrew's teeth, to keep him in countenance : And, like all the world, as the jest was turned from themselves, father and mother Smith seem'd diverted with the humour.

The fellow said, the gloves were too little.

Thrust, and be d — n'd to thee, said I : Why, fellow, thou hast not the strength of a cat.

Sir, Sir, said he, laughing, I shall hurt your Honour's side.

D — n thee, thrust, I say.

He did ; and burst out the fides of the glove.

Will, said I, where's thy pruning-knife ? By my soul, friend, I had a good mind to pare thy cursed paws. But come, here's a larger pair : Try them, when thou gettest home ; and let thy sweetheart, if thou hast one, mend the other ; and so take both.

The lady laughed at the humour ; as did my fellow, and Mrs. Smith, and Joseph : Even John laughed, tho' he seemed, by the force put upon his countenance, to be but half pleased with me neither.

Madam, said I, and stept behind the compter, bowing over it, now I hope you will buy something for yourself. No-body shall use you better, nor sell you cheaper.

Come, said she, give me six penny-worth of Portugal snuff.

They

They shewed me where it was, and I served her; and said, when she would have paid me, I took nothing at my opening.

If I treated her footman, she told me, I should not treat her.

Well, with all my heart, said I : 'Tis not for Us tradesmen to be saucy— Is it, Mrs. Smith ?

I put her sixpence in my pocket ; and, seizing her hand, took notice to her of the croud that had gathered about the door, and besought her to walk into the back shop with me.

She struggled her hand out of mine, and would stay no longer.

So I bow'd, and bid her kindly welcome, and thanked her, and hoped I should have her custom another time.

She went away smiling ; and Andrew after her; who made me a fine bow.

I began to be out of countenance at the crowd, which thicken'd apace ; and bid Will. order the chair to the door.

Well, Mrs. Smith, with a grave air, I am heartily sorry Miss Harlowe is abroad. You don't tell me where she is ?

Indeed, Sir, I cannot.

You *will* not, you mean.— She could have no notion of my coming. I came to town but last night — Have been very ill. She has almost broke my heart, by her cruelty. You know my story, I doubt not. Tell her, I must go out of town to-morrow morning. But I will send my servant, to know if she will favour me with one half-hour's conversation ; for, as soon as I get down, I shall set out for Dover, in my way to France, if I have not a countermand from her who has the sole disposal of my fate.

And so, flinging down a Portugal Six-and-thirty, I took Mr. Smith by the hand, telling him, I was sorry we had not more time to be better acquainted ; and bidding honest Joseph farewell ; who purs'd up his mouth as I passed by him, as if he thought his teeth still in jeopardy ; and bidding Mrs. Smith adieu, and to recommend me to her fair lodger, humm'd an air, and, the chair being come, whipt into it ; the people about the door seeming to be in good humour with me ; one crying, A pleasant gentle-

man, I warrant him ! And away I was carried to White's, according to direction.

As soon as I came thither, I ordered Will. to go and change his cloaths, and to disguise himself by putting on his black wig, and keeping his mouth shut ; and then to dodge about Smith's, to inform himself of the lady's motions.

I GIVE thee this impudent account of myself, that thou mayst rave at me, and call me harden'd, and what thou wilt. For, in the first place, I, who had been so lately ill, was glad I was alive ; and then I was so balked by my charmer's unexpected absence, and so ruffled by that, and by the bluff treatment of father John, that I had no other way to avoid being out of humour with all I met with. Moreover I was rejoiced to find, by the lady's absence, and by her going out at six in the morning, that it was impossible she should be so ill as thou representest her to be ; and this gave me still higher spirits. Then I know the Sex always love cheerful and humorous fellows. The dear creature herself used to be pleased with my gay temper and lively manner ; and had she been told, that I was blubbering for her in the back shop, she would have despised me still more than she does.

Furthermore, I was sensible, that the people of the house must needs have a terrible notion of me, as a savage, bloody-minded, obdurate fellow ; a perfect woman-eater ; and, no doubt, expected to see me with the claws of a lion, and the fangs of a tyger ; and it was but policy to shew them, what a harmless, pleasant fellow I am, in order to familiarize the John's and the Joseph's to me. For it was evident to me, by the good woman's calling them down, that she thought me a dangerous man. Whereas now, John and I having shaken hands together, and dame Smith having seen that I have the face, and hands, and looks of a man, and walk upright, and prate, and laugh, and joke, like other people ; and Joseph, that I can talk of taking his teeth out of his head, without doing him the least hurt ; they will all, at my next visit, be much more easy and pleasant with me than Andrew's gloves were to him ; and we shall be *bail, fellow, well met,* as the saying

ing is, and as thoroughly acquainted, as if we had known one another a twelvemonth.

When I returned to our mother's, I again cursed her and all her nymphs together; and still refused to see either Sally or Polly. I raved at the horrid arrest; and told the old dragon, that it was owing to her and hers, that the fairest virtue in the world was ruined; my reputation for ever blasted; and that I was not married, and happy in the love of the most excellent of her sex.

She, to pacify me, said, she would shew me a new face that would please me; since I would not see my Sally, who was dying for grief.

Where is this new face, cry'd I? Let me see her, tho' I shall never see any face with pleasure but Miss Harlowe's.

She won't come down, reply'd she. She will not be at the word of command yet — Is but just in the trammels; and must be waited upon, I'll assure you; and courted much besides.

Ay! said I, that looks well. Lead me to her this instant.

I followed her up: And who should she be, but that little toad, Sally.

O curse you, said I, for a devil, is it you? Is yours the new face?

O my dear, dear Mr. Lovelace? cry'd she, I am glad any-thing will bring you to me! And so the little beast threw herself about my neck, and there clung like a cat. Come, said she, what will you give me, and I'll be virtuous for a quarter of an hour, and mimic your Clarissa to the life.

I was *Belforded* all over. I could not bear such an insult upon the dear creature (for I have a soft and generous nature in the main, whatever you think); and cursed her most devoutly, for taking her name in her mouth in such a way. But the little devil was not to be balked; but fell a crying, sobbing, praying, begging, exclaiming, fainting, so that I never saw my lovely girl so well aped; and I was almost taken in; for I could have fancied I had her before me once more.

O this Sex! this artful Sex! There's no minding them. At first, indeed, their grief and their concern may be real: But give way to the hurricane, and it will soon die away

in

in soft murmurs, trilling upon your ears like the notes of a well-tuned viol. And, by Sally, one sees, that Art will generally so well supply the place of Nature, that you shall not easily know the difference. Miss Harlowe, indeed, is the only woman in the world, I believe, that can say, in the words of her favourite Job (for I can quote a text as well as she), *But it is not so with me.*

They were very inquisitive about my fair one. They told me, that you seldom came near them ; that, when you did, you put on plaguy grave airs ; would hardly stay five minutes ; and did nothing but praise Miss Harlowe, and lament her hard fate. In short, that you despised them ; was full of sentences ; and they doubted not, in a little while, would be a lost man, and marry.

A pretty character for thee, is it not ? Thou art in a blessed way, yet hast nothing to do but to *go on in it* ; and then what a work hast thou to go through ! If thou turnest back, these sorceresses will be like the Czar's Cossacks (at Pultowa, I think it was), who were planted with ready primed and cocked pieces, behind the regulars, in order to shoot them dead, if they did not push on, and conquer ; and then wilt thou be most lamentably despised by every harlot thou hast made — And, O Jack ! how formidable, in that case, will be the number of thy enemies !

I intend to regulate my motions by Will's intelligence ; for see this dear creature I must and will. Yet I have promised Lord M. to be down in two or three days, at farthest ; for he is grown plaguy fond of me since I was ill.

I am in hopes, that the word I left, that I am to go out of town to-morrow morning, will soon bring the lady back again.

Mean time, I thought I would write to divert thee, while thou art of such importance about the dying ; and as thy servant, it seems, comes backward and forward every day, perhaps I may send thee another to-morrow, with the particulars of the interview between the dear lady and me ; after which my soul thirsteth.

## LETTER CXXIV.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Tuesday, Aug. 22.

I Must write on, to divert myself: For I can get no rest; no refreshing rest. I awaked just now in a cursed fright. How a man may be affected by dreams!

' Methought I had an interview with my beloved. I found her all goodness, condescension, and forgiveness. She suffer'd herself to be overcome in my favour by the joint intercessions of Lord M, Lady Sarah, Lady Betty, and my two cousins Montague, who waited upon her in deep mourning; the ladies in long trains sweeping after them; Lord M. in a long black mantle trailing after him. They told her, they came in these robes to express their sorrow for my sins against her, and to implore her to forgive me.

' I myself, I thought, was upon my knees, with a sword in my hand, offering either to put it up in the scabbard, or to thrust it into my heart, as she should command the one or the other.

' At that moment her cousin Morden, I thought, all of a sudden, flash'd in thro' a window, with his drawn sword—Die, Lovelace, said he! this instant die, and be damned, if in earnest thou repairest not by marriage my cousin's wrongs!

' I was rising to resent this insult, I thought, when Lord M. run between us with his great black mantle, and threw it over my face: And instantly, my charmer, with that sweet voice which has so often played upon my ravished ears, wrapped her arms round me, muffled as I was in my Lord M's mantle, O spare, spare my Lovelace! And spare, O Lovelace, my beloved cousin Morden! Let me not have my distresses augmented by the fall of either or both of those who are so dear to me.

' At this, charmed with her sweet mediation, I thought I would have clasped her in my arms: When immediately the most angelic form I had ever beheld, vested all in transparent white, descended from a ceiling, which, opening, discovered a ceiling above that, stuck round

round with golden cherubs and glittering seraphs; all exulting, Welcome, welcome, welcome! and, encircling my charmer, ascended with her to the region of seraphims; and instantly, the opening ceiling closing, I lost sight of her, and of the bright form together, and found wrapt in my arms her azure robe (all stuck thick with stars of embossed silver), which I had caught hold of in hopes of detaining her; but was all that was left me of my beloved Miss Harlowe. And then (horrid to relate!) the floor sinking under me, as the ceiling had opened for her, I dropt into a hole more frightful than that of Elden; and, tumbling over and over down it, without view of a bottom, I awaked in a panic; and was as effectually disordered for half an hour, as if my dream had been a reality.'

Wilt thou forgive me troubling thee with such visionary stuff? Thou wilt see by it, only, that, sleeping or waking, my Clarissa is always present with me.

But here this moment is Will, come running hither to tell me, that his lady actually returned to her lodgings last night between eleven and twelve, and is now there, tho' very ill.

I hasten to her. But, that I may not add to her indisposition, by any rough or boisterous behaviour, I will be as soft and gentle as the dove herself in my addresses to her.

*That I do love her, O all ye host of heaven,*

*Be witness!—That she is dear to me!*

*Dearer than day to one whom sight must leave;*

*Dearer than life, to one who fears to die;*

The chair is come. I fly to my beloved.

## LETTER CXX.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

CURSE upon my stars!—Disappointed again! It was about eight when I arrived at Smith's—The woman was in the shop.

So, old acquaintance, how do you now? I know my Love is above.—Let her be acquainted that I am here, waiting

waiting for admission to her presence, and can take no denial. Tell her, that I will approach her with the most respectful duty, and in whose company she pleases; and I will not touch the hem of her garment, without her leave.

Indeed, Sir, you're mistaken. The lady is not in this house, nor near it.

I'll see that.—Will! beckoning him to me, and whispering, See if thou canst any way find out (without losing sight of the door, lest she should be below-stairs) if she be in the neighbourhood, if not within.

Will bowed and went off. Up went I, without further ceremony; attended now only by the good woman.

I went into each apartment, except that which was locked before, and was now also locked: And I called to Miss Harlowe in the voice of Love; but by the still silence was convinced she was not there. Yet, on the strength of my intelligence, I doubted not but she was in the house.

I then went up two pair of stairs, and looked round the first room: But no Miss Harlowe.

And who, pray, is in this room? Stopping at the door of another.

A widow gentlewoman, Sir.—Mrs. Lovick.

O my dear Mrs. Lovick! said I, I am intimately acquainted with her character, from my cousin John Belford. I must see Mrs. Lovick by all means. Good Mrs. Lovick, open the door.

She did.

Your servant, Madam. Be so good as to excuse me.— You have heard my story. You are an admirer of the most excellent woman in the world. Dear Mrs. Lovick, tell me what is become of her?

The poor lady, Sir, went out yesterday, on purpose to avoid you.

How so? She knew not that I would be here.

She was afraid you would come, when she heard you were recovered from your illness.—Ah! Sir, what pity it is that so fine a gentleman should make such ill returns for God's goodness to him!

You are an excellent woman, Mrs. Lovick: I know that, by my cousin John Belford's account of you; and Miss Harlowe is an angel.

Miss Harlowe is indeed an angel, replied she; and soon will be company for angels.

No jesting with such a woman as this, Jack.

Tell me of a truth, good Mrs. Lovick, where I may see this dear lady. Upon my soul, I will neither fright nor offend her. I will only beg of her to hear me speak for one half-quarter of an hour; and, if she will have it so, I will never trouble her more.

Sir, said the widow, it would be death for her to see you. She was at home last night; I'll tell you truth: But fitter to be in bed all day. She came home, she said, to die; and, if she could not avoid your visit, she was unable to fly from you; and believed she should die in your presence.

And yet go out again this morning early? How can that be, Widow?

Why, Sir, she rested not two hours, for fear of you. Her fear gave her strength, which she'll suffer for, when that fear is over. And finding herself, the more she thought of it, the less able to stay to receive your visit, she took chair, and is gone no-body knows whither. But, I believe, she intended to be carried to the water-side, in order to take boat; for she cannot bear a coach. It extremely incommoded her yesterday.

But before we talk any further, said I, if she be gone abroad, you can have no objection to my looking into every apartment above and below; because I am told she is actually in the house.

Indeed, Sir, she is *not*. You may satisfy yourself, if you please: But Mrs. Smith and I waited on her to her chair. We were forced to support her, she was so weak. She said, Where *can* I go, Mrs. Lovick? Whither *can* I go, Mrs. Smith? — Cruel, cruel man! Tell him I called him so, if he come again! — God give him that peace which he denies me!

Sweet creature! cry'd I, and looked down, and took out my handkerchief.

The widow wept. I wish, said she, I had never known so excellent a lady, and so great a sufferer! I love her as my own child!

Mrs. Smith wept.

I then

I then gave over the hope of seeing her for this time. I was extremely chagrined at my disappointment, and at the account they gave of her ill health.

Would to Heaven, said I, she would put it in my power to repair her wrongs! I have been an ungrateful wretch to her. I need not tell you, Mrs. Lovick, how much I have injured her, nor how much she suffers by her relations implacableness. 'Tis the latter, Mrs. Lovick, 'tis That, Mrs. Smith, that cuts her to the heart. Her family is the most implacable family on earth; and the dear creature, in refusing to see me, and to be reconciled to me, shews her relation to them a little too plainly.

O Sir, said the widow, not one syllable of what you say belongs to this lady. I never saw so sweet a creature! so edifying a piety! and one of so forgiving a temper! She is always accusing herself, and excusing her relations. And, as as to You, Sir, she forgives you: She wishes you well; and happier than you will let her be. Why will you not, Sir, why will you not, let her die in peace? 'Tis all she wishes for. You don't look like a hard-hearted gentleman!—How can you thus hunt and persecute a poor lady, whom none of her relations will look upon? It makes my heart bleed for her.

And then she wept again. Mrs. Smith wept also. My seat grew uneasy to me. I shifted to another several times; and what Mrs. Lovick farther said, and shewed me, made me still more uneasy.

Bad as the poor lady was last night, said she, she transcribed into her book a meditation on your persecuting her thus. I have a copy of it. If I thought it would have any effect, I would read it to you.

Let me read it myself, Mrs. Lovick.

She gave it to me. It has a Harlowe-spirited title. And from a forgiving spirit, intolerable. I desired to take it with me. She consented, on condition that I shewed it to 'Squire Belford. So here, Mr. 'Squire Belford, thou may'st read it, if thou wilt.

On being hunted after by the enemy of my soul.

Monday, Aug. 21.

**D**E<sup>L</sup>I<sup>V</sup>E<sup>R</sup> me, O Lord, from the evil man. Preserve me from the violent man.

Who imagines mischief in his heart.

He hath sharpened his tongue like a serpent. Adders poison is under his lips.

Keep me, O Lord, from the bands of the wicked. Preserve me from the violent man; who hath purposed to overthrow my goings.

He hath hid a snare for me. He hath spread a net by the way-side. He hath set gins for me in the way wherein I walked.

Keep me from the snares which he hath laid for me, and the gins of this worker of iniquity.

The enemy hath persecuted my soul. He hath smitten my life down to the ground. He hath made me dwelt in darkness, as those that have been long dead.

Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me. My heart within me is desolate.

Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble.

For my days are consumed like smoke: and my bones are burnt as the hearth.

My heart is smitten and withered like grass: so that I forget to eat my bread.

By reason of the voice of my groaning, my bones cleave to my skin.

I am like a pelican of the wilderness. I am like an owl of the desert.

I watch; and am as a sparrow alone upon the house-top.

I have eaten ashes like bread; and mingled my drink with weeping:

Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.

My days are like a shadow that declineth, and I am withered like grass.

Grant not, O Lord, the desires of the wicked: further not his devices, lest he exalt himself.

Why

Why now, Mrs. Lovick, said I, when I had read this meditation, as she called it, I think I am very severely treated by the lady, if she mean me in all this. For how is it that I am the *enemy of her soul*, when I love her both soul and body?

She says, that I am a *violent man*, and a *wicked man*.—That I have been so, I own: But I repent, and only wish to have it in my power to repair the injuries I have done her.

The *gin*, the *snare*, the *net*, mean matrimony, I suppose.—But is it a crime in me to wish to marry her? Would any other woman think it so? and choose to become a *pe-lican in the wilderness*, or a *lonely sparrow on the house-top*, rather than to have a mate that would chirp about her all day and all night?

She says, she has *eaten ashes like bread*—A sad mistake to be sure!—and *mingled her drink with weeping*—Sweet maudlin soul! should I say of any-body confessing this, but Miss Harlowe.

She concludes with praying, that the *desires of the wicked* (meaning poor me, I doubt) *may not be granted*; that *my devices may not be furthered, lest I exalt my-self*.—I should undoubtedly exalt my-self, and with reason, could I have the honour and the blessing of such a wife. And if my *desires* have so honourable an end, I know not why I should be called *wicked*, and why I should not be allowed to hope, that my *honest devices* may be *furthered*, that I *MAY exalt myself*.

But here, Mrs. Lovick, let me ask, as something is undoubtedly meant by the *lonely sparrow on the house-top*, Is not the dear creature at this very instant (tell me truly) concealed in Mrs. Smith's cockloft?—What say you, Mrs. Lovick; What say you, Mrs. Smith, to this?

They assured me to the contrary; and that she was actually abroad, and they knew not where.

Thou seest, Jack, that I would fain have diverted the chagrin given me by the womens talk, and by this collection of Scripture-texts drawn up in array against me. And several other whimsical and light things I said (all I had for it!) for this purpose. But the widow would not let me come off so. She stuck to me; and gave me, as I told thee,

thee, a good deal of uneasiness, by her sensible and serious expostulations. Mrs. Smith put in now and then; and the two Jack-pudden fellows, John and Joseph, not being present, I had no provocation to turn the conversation into a farce; and, at last, they both joined warmly to endeavour to prevail upon me to give up all thoughts of seeing the lady. But I could not hear of that. On the contrary, I besought Mrs. Smith to let me have one of her rooms but till I could see her; and were it but for one, two, or three days, I would pay a year's rent for it; and quit it the moment the interview was over. But they desired to be excused; and were sure the lady would not come to the house till I was gone, were it for a month.

This pleased me; for I found they did not think her so very ill as they would have me believe her to be; but I took no notice of the slip, because I would not guard them against more of the like.

In short, I told them, I *must* and *would* see her: But that it should be with all the respect and veneration that heart could pay to excellence like hers. And that I would go round to all the Churches in London and Westminster, where there were Prayers or Service, from sun-rise to sunset, and haunt their house like a ghost, till I had the opportunity my soul panted after.

This I bid them tell her. And thus ended our serious conversation.

I took leave of them, and went down; and, stepping into my chair, caused myself to be carried to Lincoln's Inn; and walked in the gardens till Chapel was opened; and then I went in, and staid prayers, in hopes of seeing the dear creature enter: But to no purpose; and yet I prayed most devoutly that she might be conducted thither, either by my good angel, or her own. And indeed I burn more than ever with impatience to be once more permitted to kneel at the feet of this adorable woman. And had I met her, or spy'd her in the Chapel, it is my firm belief, that I should not have been able (tho' it had been in the midst of the Sacred Office, and in the presence of thousands) to have forborne prostration to her, and even clamorous supplication for her forgiveness: A Christian act; the exercise of it therefore worthy of the place.

After

After Service was over, I stept into my chair again, and once more was carried to Smith's, in hopes I might have surprized her there: But no such happiness for thy friend. I staid in the back-shop an hour and half, by my watch; and again underwent a good deal of preaching from the women. John was mainly civil to me now; won over a little by my serious talk, and the honour I professed for the lady; and they all three wished matters could be made up between us: But still insisted, that she could never get over her illness; and that her heart was broken. A cue, I suppose, they had from you.

While I was there, a letter was brought for her by a particular hand. They seemed very solicitous to hide it from me; which made me suspect it was for her. I desired to be suffered to cast an eye upon the seal, and the superscription; promising to give it back to them unopened.

Looking upon it, I told them, I knew the hand and seal. It was from her sister (a). And I hoped it would bring her news that she would be pleased with.

They joined most heartily in the same hope: And giving the letter to them again, I civilly took my leave, and went away.

But I will be there again presently; for I fancy my courteous behaviour to these women, will, on their report of it, procure me the favour I so earnestly covet. And so I will leave my letter unsealed, to tell thee the event of my next visit at Smith's.

THY servant just calling, I send thee this. And will soon follow it by another. Mean time, I long to hear how poor Belton is. To whom my best wishes.

(a) See Vol. VI. p. 52.

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loop which will turn the top & cover my chest & I  
will begin to constrict myself so as to stop the  
current of air and stop the heart or if I can't get  
the loop off then this would be considered as my  
last stand and according to last body a man would die  
within 24 hours of this being applied.

At present I mention on how I have contrived  
a simple bloodstancher which consists of a small bag  
made from Linen cloth pasted with Gum Arabic  
and A small piece of raw meat tied into this bag & filled with

blood which I will tie around my waist & it will stop all  
the blood of a certain vein instantaneously.

With this I will be able to stop any part of my body  
and have a hope of saving the life of a man who  
has lost a limb or has been shot in the arm or leg.

You will I hope credit me now I have contrived  
a simple bloodstancher which consists of a small bag  
made from Linen cloth pasted with Gum Arabic  
and a small piece of raw meat tied into this bag & filled with

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